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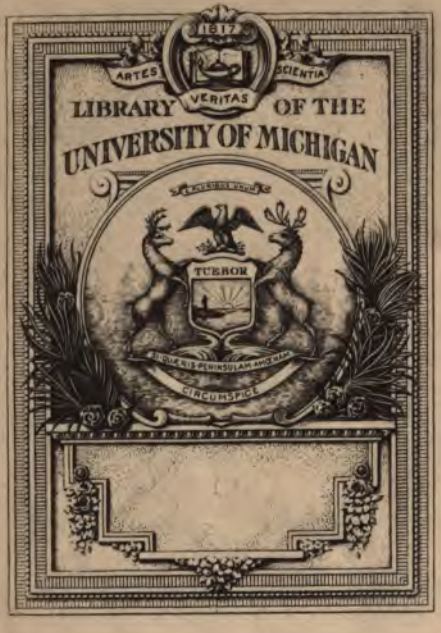
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THE

DRAMATIC WORKS

OF

BARON KOTZEBUE.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN,

BY

CHARLES SMITH.

VOL. III.

CONTAINING

FRATERNAL DISCORD,
WRITING DESK,
ABBE DE L'EPEE,
FALSE SHAME,
EAST INDIAN,
SPEED THE PLOUGH.

NEW-YORK:

PRINTED FOR STEPHEN STEPHENS, NO. 165, PEARL-STREET.

1800.

COUNT

BENYOWSKY;

OR, THE

CONSPIRACY OF KAMTSCHATKA:

A TRAGI-COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

Translated from the German of

AUGUSTUS VON KOTZEBUE,

BY THE

REV. W. RENDER,

Teacher of the German Language in the University of Cambridge.

Baltimore:

Printed for THOMAS, ANDREWS & BUTLER, by

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1803.

301231

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

GOVERNOR *of Kamtschatka.*
HETTMAN, *Captain of the Cossacks.*
COUNT BENYOWSKY, } *Exiles.*
CRUSTIEW, }
STEPANOFF, }
KUDRIN, }
BATURIN, }
WASILI, }
TSCHULOSNIKOFF, *a Sea Captain*
GREGORY, *his Nephew.*
KULOSSOW, *a Russian Lieutenant.*
KASARINOFF, *a Merchant.*
SERVANT.

ATHANASIA, *the Governor's Daughter.*
THEODORA, *her Attendant.*

Children of Kasarinoff, Conspirators, Servants, &c.

COUNT BENYOWSKY.

ACT I.

SCENE.—*An Apartment of the* GOVERNOR'S *in the Fortress of* BOLCHEREZK—*The* GOVERNOR *and* HETTMAN *are discovered sitting on the right side, playing at Chess, and very attentive to the game. On the left side,* ATHANASIA *with a book in her hand, and* THEODORA *working embroidery.*

Hettman. CHECK to the King!

Governor. What?—And by a pawn?—That's very hard.

Hett. Aye! these common fellows*—Those who can manage them.

Gov. Yes, yes—they are a match for Kings!

Athan. [*Throwing away her book.*] Ah!

Theo. You sigh?

Athan. Why was I born in this place!

Theo. What signifies where one is born, if one is alive?

Athan. Livest thou then?

Theo. A droll question that! I'll give you a proof of it at breakfast.

Athan. Yes, every one can eat.

Theo. Except the dead. A being that eats must of course be alive.

Athan. Yours is the happiness of an oyster!

Theo. Oh! if wishes were magic wands.

Athan. What are you working there?

Theo. I am embroidering flowers.

Athan. Where do these flowers grow?—Not here—Italy is a lovely country; I was just reading about it. There, orange groves blossom; here, we work them in tapestry. There, nature is a healthy youth; here, an infirm grey-headed old woman. Those beings may indeed say, "we live."

* A pawn in German is called *bauer*, literally a *boor*, a common fellow; this circumstance gives point to the reply in the original, hardly to be preserved in the translation.

Theo. Why, yes; they have what we want; and they want what we enjoy. Our country produces other plants and other pleasures.

Gov. My Knight is lost,

Hett. And my Queen saved.

Athan. Pleasures do you say? All your houses are prisons: wrapt up to the chin in furs, you shrink from the fresh air; hungry hounds drag your sledges through eternal snows; no flower unfolds itself; no fruit can ripen. Are these your pleasures?

Theo. What care I for flowers and fruits, as long as I have men.

Athan. Men?—alas! what men!—"to morrow," (I hear them say) "to-morrow is a holiday; to-morrow we will enjoy ourselves." And what is their enjoyment? The Russian intoxicates himself with brandy, the Kamtschadale with the juice of poisonous herbs; then they stagger about the streets, and the very beasts turn out of the way for them in disgust. Aye, this is enjoyment!

Theo. Or else we sit together in a ring, and sing a merry song to the *Balalaika.** Is not that enjoyment?

Hett. Check to the Queen!

Gov. My game is in a bad way

Athan. (*Lost in a deep meditation.*) No, my friend; to my heart it affords no pleasure. Were but my good mother yet living!

Theo. Has your heart any secrets?

Athan. Oh, no! we eat, drink, and sleep; who can make any secret of that? Other wants are unknown here.

Theo So much the better for us.

Athan. Intellect and feeling ripen not in this cold country; they scarcely bud. Estimating the value of a sable's skin; computing the profit of a sea voyage; steering from hence to the Aleutian, and from the Aleutian to the Curilian Isles, comprizes all the science of these barbarians; a successful bargain is their sole enjoyment. Happy mortals have love and wine; these savages have only sensuality and brandy. The sweet feelings of humanity are unknown to them, because these warm the heart and not the palate. Where'er I look, where'er I go, wretched exiles cross my way; every where a muster-roll of human woe; Complaint in every eye; want on every cheek. No sun-beam —tears alone melt these eternal snows.

Theo. You speak like an orator. These detestable books! your father should let them be used to warm the guard room.

Athan. The books he may burn, their contents remain in my heart

* A Ruſſian muſical inſtrument reſembling the guitar.

Theo. Aye, I see what 'tis you want. You are just at that time of life when a maiden forms a thousand schemes and adheres to none. She wants every thing but what she has; give her every thing, she wants still something else. To a craving heart the world is a desart: to a contented one Kamtschatka is a paradise.

Athan. You are right, Theodora! I am alone in the world! And when once my father—he is old and infirm—when he too leaves me, alas! what will then become of me?

Hett. (*Takes a bishop.*) I have long had my eye on this bishop.

Gov. He guarded my King.

Hett. Come, proceed!

Gov. I see no hopes.

Enter Servant.

Lieutenant Kulossow is arrived. He has brought here a party of Exiles. They are in the anti-chamber, and wait your Excellency's commands.

Gov. Let them come in.—(*Exit Servant.*)

Athan. Again another picture of human misery. Come Theodora, I cannot see them. (*She is going.*)

(*Enter* BENYOWSKY, *with the Lieutenant* KULOSSOW, *and a number of Exiles. All stand near the door.* ATHANASIA *starts, attempts to go, turns back, casts a look at* BENYOWSKY, *looks again, becomes embarrassed, and speaks as she sits down.*) Let us go, Theodora.

Theo. I am ready.

Athan. (*Looking timidly at Benyowsky.*) Do you see that man?

Theo. I see a great many men.

Athan. Not so! one only—his appearance betrays a broken spirit; but his commanding eye speaks the contrary.

Theo. I see one man, whose haggard cheeks betray sickness and want.

Athan. Health of soul beams from his eyes. See what boldness and freedom in his looks, while those of his companions are cast down to the earth. He seems to say, I am every where free! The Hero looks upon his chains as upon the trappings of rank. The very sight of him thrills me.

Theo. Shall we go.

Athan. Wherefore should we go? To become the confident of misery is to hoard up a treasure for futurity.

Theo. Well, then let us remain. (*She goes on with her work.*)

(BENYOWSKY *comes forward, and places himself behind the* GOVERNOR'S *chair, looking over the game.*)

Athan. Look ! how unshaken—as if he was at home here.

Theo. (*Looking up.*) It will be well for him if your father sees his boldness in as favourable a light.

Athan. Fear nothing, loftiness of spirit in adversity captivates all hearts.

Gov. (*Getting up.*) The game is lost

Hett. Yes, it is gone.

Benyowsky. Not so completely.

Gov. (*Looks up at him with astonishment, views him earnestly, measures him from head to foot, and speaks.*) Who are you?

Ben. I have been a *soldier*—*once* a commander—*now* a slave.

Gov. Do you understand this game?

Ben. A little.

Gov. Do you think it could be recovered?

Ben. Perhaps it might.

Gov. Try then. (*To Hettman.*) With your permission.

Hett. Oh ! by all means. There is no chance left; in four more moves you are check mate.

(BENYOWSKY *and* HETTMAN *play.*)

Gov. (*To Kulossow.*) Your report.

Kulossow. Here it is.

Gov. (*After running it over slightly in a half whisper.*) Do you know any thing of this man's history ?

Kulos. He was General of the Polish confederates, and was taken prisoner, being dangerously wounded.

Gov. His name ?

Kulos. Count Benyowsky.

Ben. Check to the King and Queen.

Hett. The devil !

Gov. (*To Kulossow.*) Was your voyage dangerous ?

Kulos. Very much so. On our passage from Ochotz hither, we were overtaken by a violent storm. The mainmast came by the board and crushed the Captain's arm. His pain made him unfit for duty. In this extremity, Count Benyowsky took upon him the direction of the ship : it is to his courage and dexterity alone that we are indebted for our safety.

Ben. Check mate

Hett. (*Throwing up the game with displeasure.*) Your surely deal with the devil.

Ben. (*smiling.*) Good fortune, united with a little prudence, has been honored of old with the name of the devil.

Hett. (*Murmuring.*) I am as prudent as any one ; when *I*

say prudent, I mean Hettman of the Cossacks, the second personage in the Province.—Here is the sum I have lost. (*He throws several Bank notes on the table.*)

Gov. It seems, Count, you are master at the chess-board, as well as at sea; there you saved a ship that was on the brink of destruction, and here you have recovered a desperate game. For this last I thank you on my own account; for the former I thank you in the name of my sovereign.

Ben. (*With a dignified manly bow.*) Those whom I have saved have already thanked me.

Gov. Take off his fetters. (*They take them off.*) Your conduct has procured you at the first moment what otherwise years alone could have obtained you—my esteem. You could have made yourself master of the ship during the storm; you could have escaped with her to some distant part of the world.

Ben. I could have done more—let the ship founder and perish with it. I had the courage to preserve my life.

Athan. Oh, Theodora! what a man!

Gov. As far as my office and my duty can be made consistent with my esteem for you, I will gladly do every thing to ease your fate.

Ben. Sir, I envy you the delightful prerogative of exercising generosity towards the unfortunate: and I esteem you, since you know how to use it.

Gov. For the present, it is my duty to make you acquainted with your future manner of life.

Ben. He who has known how to command, knows also how to obey.

Gov. Submission and a peaceable demeanor are the first law of this place

Ben. For a slave no very arduous task.

Gov. You are free, and will receive provisions for three days, afterward you must provide for your own support. Every exile is furnished with a musquet, a lance, powder and shot. The chase will in future be your only employment.

Ben. (*With alacrity.*) The chace and arms! the image of war! and at least a dream of liberty.

Gov. You are to deliver to the crown yearly, the skins of six sables, fifty rabbits, two foxes, and two ermines. Two miles distant from the town you will build your houses, for which you shall be supplied with materials from the magazine.

Ben. Sir, you are very kind. He who gives employment to the unfortunate, gives him consolation.

Gov. I shall co-operate with time and habit to smooth the rough path of your destiny. Fare you well.

Ben. Your Empress is a great character. She has appointed a man of honour to command, where a man of honour was most wanted. I go to give an example to my companions, how men should endure misfortune.

(*Retires with the rest of the Exiles.*)

Gov. (*Looking after him as he goes.*) A great man.

Hett. A great chess player, you should say.

Athan. A man of a noble mind.

Hett. He plays impetuously, move upon move.

Gov. With what dignity he supports his misfortune.

Hett. My game was so favourable.

Athan. With such noble pride, yet such easy manners.

Hett. Check to the King and Queen: that I shall never forget.

Gov. With pleasure will I spare him, as far as I can and dare.

Athan. Suppose, my dear father, you should excuse him from hunting in these rough winter days, and instead of that—(*She hesitates.*)

Gov. What instead of that?

Athan. I have long ago wished to learn French and music. You have also wished it—perhaps—

Gov. Perhaps what.

Athan. The Count could give me instruction.

Gov. If he understands them.

Athan. (*Hastily.*) Surely, surely, he does!

Theo. (*aside.*) Aye to be sure!

Gov. We shall see;—Come, my friend, breakfast waits for us.

Hett. (*As he is retiring with the Governor.*) Check to the King and Queen; 'tis enough to make one mad.

Theo. (*Packing up her embroidery.*) Shall not we go to breakfast too?

Athan. (*Wrapt in herself, in a deep reverie, scarcely hearing her.*) Immediately. (*A pause.*)

Theo. Your father waits for you to pour out the tea.

Athan. Do you think so? (*A pause.*)

Theo. It will also be necessary to get the sugar out of the cannister.

Athan. (*After a pause, awaking as from a dream.*) What do you say?—Yes—no—you are wrong.

Theo. (*Laughing.*) In what—Madam?

Athan. In what, (*She again sinks into her former reverie.*) Alas!

Theo. I am hungry.

Athan. Hungry! How can you be hungry now?

Theo. (*Laughing.*) Why should I not be hungry?

(ATHANASIA *makes no answer, casts down her eyes upon the ground; her sighs betray the disorder of her mind.*)

Theo. (*Aside.*) How shall I cure these whims?

Enter a Footman.

His excellency entreats your Ladyship—

Athan. (*Recovering herself.*) Ah! the master of languages! I am coming! (*Exit quickly.*)

Theo. The language-master!—I understand! Aye—aye, indeed! I understand! (*She follows.*)

The Scene changes to the Village of the Exiles; old CRUSTIEW *comes out of his hut.*

Crus. Hail to the ruddy morning-sun on this serene winter's day!—Whu! it is cold!—The snow glitters and crackles. The smoke rises in the air in columns. The breath of the dogs appears like steam. Icicles hang on my fur collar, where it has been moistened by my breath—Oh, my heart! why art thou ever warm and glowing? Old fool! thy hair is white as the hoar-frost that covers these pines, and yet, under this snow, a flame rages like the volcanos of Kalitowa—Yes, freedom! freedom! Thou art like the bread of life to all ranks of men; thou art the staff of age. Bread is the body's nourishment—freedom, the food of the soul—Alas! I have been expiating one single indiscretion by twenty three years' banishment! (*He falls into a romantic ecstasy.*) My wife and only son! how do you live? How fares it with you? What! already wrinkles on thy face, my Eliza? And is thy cheek so sicklied over with grief for thy Crustiew? is thy hand still stretched out to support thy infirm old man? Give me, give me, that lovely hand! What earthly calamity is not softened by a good wife!—And thou, too, my dear Alexander—Ah! how thou art grown! thou wast still in thy cradle when I imprinted the last kiss on thy toothless mouth, and with my chains marked a cross upon thy breast and forehead—There you sit now together, and Alexander says—tell me, how did my father look? and his mother drops a tear upon her needle-work—a tear in which my image floats. There, sorrowing, she celebrates our wedding day; there she courts remembrance as a guest, and grief too appears, though uninvited. (*Bursting into tears.*) Oh, God! suffer me, but for one minute of the

few I have yet to live, to feel in her arms, that there is a being in the world who loves me!

STEPANOFF *enters with a gun, a fox, and a couple of rabbits on his shoulders.*

Stepanoff. Good morning to you, old man! The sun to day will congeal into a sheet of ice. There he is, fixed in the sky, as much without power and warmth, as if he were the miserable daub of some bungling painter.

Crus. You were out, notwithstanding, very early.

Step. I have shot a fox and a couple of rabbits. An hour later they would have been frozen. There, only feel; they are as hard and stiff as bones. They have scarcely bled; nothing but a little red ice came from the wound.

Crus. When were you in town?

Step. Yesterday evening. There is a party of exiles arrived.

Crus. (*Eagerly.*) Indeed!—Ah! there I catch myself in a detestable wish.

Step. Are you raving again?

Crus. Shall I wish misery to others because I am miserable?

Step. Why not? Fresh companions in misfortune. It affords a kind of consolation to hear them bewailing what habit has already made tolerable to us.

Crus. Are there many of them?

Step. About twenty. There is one amongst them, a noble Pole, valiant, enterprizing, intrepid in danger. He is my man!

Crus. What are you brooding upon?

Step. I am brooding upon your courage—upon your gasconades—Is this a life? Heaven and hell! Ask me, whether I would rather be the hunter, or the hunted fox? I know not how to answer you. I envy the fox, because he has his anxiety; he listens and flies: he steals and enjoys. No change of sensation tells me that I live.

Crus. Courage without power, is like a child who plays at soldiers.

Step, Courage without power is nonsense. Courage is never without power. In short, I will endure it no longer.

Crus. We all would not, but we must,

Step. Choose me your leader; I will choose the stranger next in command. In a few days we are free.

Crus. (*Shaking his head.*) You, Stepanoff! Unite your courage with another's prudence and experience, then we may do.

Step. Aye, how sagacious! That these old greybeards should be always persuading us, the world must perish without their wisdom. The old man always wishes for a steady light; he creeps slowly and softly. Youth asks but a flash, he sees and grasps.

Crus. How long has this intoxication possessed you? A few months ago I heard you laugh while others murmured.

Step. And now I gnash my teeth, while others only murmur.

Crus. Whence comes this sudden metamorphosis?

Step. Hark'ye old man, and comprehend if you are able. Whether I warmed myself at a stove or in the sun; was drawn by horses or by dogs: ate sterlet* or dried fish; was once indifferent to me, and will continue to be indifferent, if the woman I love will but partake with me.

Crus. Are you in love?

Step. I am: is that wonderful?

Crus. And are you beloved?

Step: Who asks that question! Women's hearts one must not be long in bargaining for. Pretend that you do not much value the ware, and you will get it cheap.

Crus. Who is your beloved?

Step. Athanasia.

Crus. The Governor's daughter!

Step. What do you start at?

Crus. Are you mad?

Step. Ha! ha! ha! Is then the Governor's daughter less a women than others?

Crus. You are right; I ought not to have been surprised, I ought to have laughed; a prisoner, an exile, banished from all society; who dares not so much as call his pocket-knife his own property; who only enters the castle, which she inhabits, when he is obliged to work there as a slave!

Step. It is just that which determines me. I love—I rage! —The maiden passes me, her silk gown rustles by my side, she scarce observes me; or, if she does, there is nought but pity in her looks. Not even on the first Easter day, when every Russian freely approaches another, and ventures to kiss him, saying, "Christ is risen!" not even then dare I approach her. But it shall soon be otherwise! What I can do, I will dare!

Crus. Stepanoff, you have intoxicated yourself early this morning.

Step. Ha! ha! ha! A grey-beard mistakes manly spirit for the fumes of brandy. A great action to vulgar souls seems madness; but when it has succeeded, their admiration stamps the actor a hero,

Enter WASILI *hastily.*

Wasili. Some new exiles are arrived, they are already approaching the village.

* A kind of trout, esteemed a great delicacy.

Step. St. George be thanked! then we shall hear once more how the world goes on; whether men still are fools, and which kind of folly is now the most predominant.

Crus. Go, Wasili, take care that a new cask is tapped, spread the table, set on bottles and glases, caviar and cedar-nuts. Perhaps they are hungry, and we may succeed in beguiling their sorrow for the first quarter of an hour. (*Exeunt Wasili into Crustiew's hut.*)

Step. An excellent fellow this Wasili! There are occupations in the world, which mould a man into a certain form for life, like a piece of paper which has once been folded, its marks are never obliterated. Does not one discover at the first sight, that this man has been a page of the bed-chamber? He announces those that arrive, he conducts them when they depart, he busies himself in carying news; he knows how to set out a table, he is as idle as a fat lap-dog, and the inside of his head is like a woman's work-basket.

Crus. However, he resembles you in one thing; his tongue is as sharp as yours.

Step. It is only a cat's tongue; it can lick off the skin, but not wound.

Crus. There come the strangers.

BENYOWSKY *and the Exiles enter. Meanwhile curiosity and joy attract the former Inhabitants of the Village out of their Huts. They assemble round the new comers.*

Crus. Welcome, welcome amongst us, companions in misery.

Step. Our welcome is the salutation of the damned in hell, when the devil brings in fresh souls?

Ben. Participated sufferings are but half sufferings; I salute you all fraternally.

Crus. Give me your hand, stranger. (*He shakes it.*) I see here still traces of fetters lately worn; my hand too was once red as yours across the wrist, but twenty-theree years obliterate both good and evil.

Ben. How! have you inhabited this coast twenty-three years already? And still live?

Crus. I still hope.

Ben. Hope is then the only treasure which grows with misfortune.

Crus. It is a treasure, which one readily imparts, and yet never exhausts.

Step. What is hope without courage? A consumptive running footman.

Ben. Misfortune insures courage.

Step. Not always. Despair alone gives courage, misfortune lulls it asleep.

Crus. No unreasonable talk; you want refreshment. We have prepared breakfast, and will entertain you with a frugal meal, but willing heart.

Ben. Tell me, where are we to live? Where are we to build our huts.

Crus. The rough season does not permit you to begin building at present. Our huts are at your service. We shall make shift till next spring. Go, Wasili, fetch me the tickets upon which our names are written, that I may throw them in my cap, and each exile choose his companion by lot. (*Exit Wasili.*

Ben. (*Aside to Crustiew.*) My good old man let me live with you.

Crus. (*Aside.*) Very well. (*Aloud.*) Now tell me, is there no one amongst you who knows the deserted wife of old Crustiew of Novogorod? (*Looking round anxiously.*)

First Exile. *Comes forward.*) I know her.

Crus. (*With much emotion, embracing him.*) Ah my friend! is she alive?

First Exile. She is.

Crus. How does she live?

First Exile. Tranquil and retired. I saw her not long since at the holy watering feast.

Crus. And my son Alexander?

First Exile. He is a soldier, and has conducted himself bravely.

Crus. Oh God! perhaps now for the first time the thanks of a happy being ascends up to thee from Kamtschatka!—May you, my friend, for these happy tidings, enjoy all that God can grant you—Consolation and joy in slavery.

Wasili. (*Comes back.*) Here are the tickets.

Crus. (*Shakes them in his cap, and takes out one unobserved, which he gives Benyowsky clandestinely.*) Seem as if you had drawn this. (*Aloud.*) Now draw each of you the name of his future companion.

Step. In this lottery devilish few prizes are drawn. The huts are nests, and the inhabitants ravens.

Ben. (*Puts his hand, for appearance-sake, in the cap, opens his lot, and reads*) Crustiew!

Crus. You are welcome to me! we will partake in pleasing reflections, and exchange wishes and hopes for each other's welfare.

Ben. I dare promise that you will not be a loser by the exchange.

First Exile. (*Draws and reads.*) Stepanoff!

Step. It you can laugh, when you have the cholic, you are welcome to me.

Second Exile. (*Draws* Gurcinin.

Step. He will tell you stories of the Polish dances in the times of the Empress Elizabeth.

Third Exile. (*Draws.*) Alexey!

Step. He was once a high-priest; he will teach you to say prayers.

Fourth Exile. (*Draws.*) Baturin!

Step. Oh, he can describe you the Pigmy-wedding, under Peter the First.

Fifth Exile. (*Draws.*) Heraklius Zadskoy!

Step. He will drink you under the table, though you should have been all your life tapster at a gin-shop.

Sixth Exile. (*Draws.*) Andrew Biatzinin!

Step He understands teaching birds, and snaring hares.

Seventh Exile. (*Draws.*) Gregory Lobtschoff.

Step. He counts how many hairs grow upon the back of a sable, and how many eggs the ant lays.

Crus. Well, that's settled. Now to breakfast, that our new friendship may increase over the full pitcher.

Ben. Let the full jug give it growth, our misfortune must acquire firmness and duration.

(*Exeunt omnes into* Crustiew's *hut.*

ACT II.

A mean Apartment in CRUSTIEW'S *House*; BENYOWSKY *sitting at the window, with his head resting on his hand.*

Benyowsky. AT length the morning dawns. At length the sun casts a glance upon Kamtschatka;—a glance, cold and comfortless as my wretched fate. Where are you, ye gay visions of my early youth? I am forsaken—left to solitary, gloomy meditation. No voice will whisper o'er my sick-bed, "Hist! he sleeps!" No tears will fall upon my grave, or sigh proclaim, "alas, he is no more!" No one hates, no one loves me—and do I still live!—Have they left thee knife, spear, sword, and pistol, and dost thou live?—Up! break thy fetters! Burst thy prison! My soul is free! My essence knows no chains.—Ah! there hope appears, lovely daughter of captivity—the delight of every captive. The dagger drops from

my hand, and I recline upon her bosom. (*A pause.*) Fool in leading-strings! Hope is a mere doll, which grown-up children play with even to their grave, lest they weep over their misery—Away with thee! I am not thy dupe, I am a man!—Where is the power that rules my spirit? Who is Lord of my life, but my God—and myself?—(*He observes a knife lying on the table. Fixes his eyes upon it with an earnest and horrible aspect. On a sudden he stretches out his hand and grasps it. Raises his hand irresolutely to stab himself. Looks at the knife, and then up to Heaven, alternately. His hand descends gradually upon his knee. As he throws his other arm on the back of the chair, and rests his head upon it, a miniature, set in diamonds, drops from his hair. He starts from his seat in agitation, snatches the miniature up, and contemplates it stedfastly. By degrees, sorrow glistens in his eyes, and he cries out:*)—My Emilia, my wife! (*He throws the knife far away from him*) Thee, I have rescued! Thee, rapacity has not torn from me. I have preserved thee in my hair—and in my heart! Emilia, the globe lies between us, but God and love know neither space nor time! For thy sake will I live!—Live and labour, struggle and dare! This picture be my shield, my talisman, the charm that shall protect me. To the heart which love inhabits, fear is a stranger, and vice a cast-off menial. Return, gentle hope, and associate with thy sister love. Separate no more, lovely pair! My wife, my Emilia loves me equally whether an apartment or a quarter of the globe divide us. At this same morning hour, she is praying for my deliverance, while an infant in her arms lisps out its father's name. Live! Benyowsky, live! Thy wife and infant claim thy life!

Enter CRUSTIEW. BENYOWSKY *hastily conceals the picture.*

Crustiew. Good morning, my friend, my brother! (*Holds out his hand to him.*) I do not ask how you have slept: we are only separated by a wainscot. You have been walking about all the live long night, and groaning; I lying in my bed, and groaning responsively.

Ben. Pardon me, good old man. Time and habit will soon enable me to relinquish my own rest without disturbing yours.

Crus. Sleep is not always rest; and woe is the wretch whose only rest is sleep—A word or two escaped you yesterday concerning the possibility of our deliverance, and hopes of better days; my old heart immediately caught fire and blazed forth into a flame.

Ben. A flame without fuel.

Crus. How? It will never be extinguished. (*With an air of secrecy and solemnity.*) For three and twenty years have I been

brooding over the great project. It has ripened slowly like gold in the womb of the mine. Many things I have already prepared; much is done—much still remains to be done. Twenty men have bound themselves to me by an oath. My band is furnished with powerful engines. Boldness—ability—experience—courage—despair! One thing is still wanting. In none have I discovered the true spirit of a commander. One man is tickled by ambition; another quarrels about birth and rank, even in fetters; one has no comprehension for a methodical and systematic whole; another will contend for his object to day, and to-morrow stop midway to consider of it; in short, every one fills his proper station tolerably well, but all want the stamp of a genuine great mind. There are wheels enough, but no main-spring.

Ben. Yourself.

Crus. I know what I am. The boy may grow up into a spirited youth, the greybeard can never regain his manhood. Give me time to contemplate every part of an enterprize, and my courage is often equal to my experience. But when sudden perils flash forth like lightning in my path, when years depend on the thought of the minute—this sheme or that—then am I staggered, then irresolute, and my old age fails.

Ben. Suppose you found a man such as your fancy requires; what must he do with such a pack of inferior criminals? Foolhardiness without courage—intrepidity without magnanimity—momentary intoxication! who will answer for their fidelity?

Crus. I—and their own misery. Shall I describe it to you, together with your own future destination? (*With increasing animation.*) Believe me, they are not all criminals. Many a one has a hasty word conducted to this grave. Miserable is the guilty;—still more miserable the wretch, whose indiscretion loads him with the weight of fetters. Bent down with pain and remorse, he treads these inhospitable shores, and penury bids him welcome: faces on which merited punishment, and often nature's own hand, has stamped the mark of villainy, scowl upon him; in vain he seeks a friend. Eager longings for the future, and sweet recollection of the past—those cordials to hope—but tortures to despair—to these, the fruits of domestic love, he has bidden an eternal adieu. Industry and labour only lengthen out his woes, He can possess no property; every one plunders him with impunity! He must submit to oppression with patience: and should injury provoke him to revenge, he is strangled and thrown to the dogs.* Banished from all honourable society like the rejected race of India—servitude and mean employments—

* So it is enacted by the laws of Peter the Great.

—dried fish and the slave-whip—ah! what a picture of misery! —Health brings him no pleasure, his sickness is destitute of every consolation—On his death bed—already—ere he quits the world—the world has abandoned him. His last groan dies away in the silence of the desart, and the dank dew of death hangs unwiped upon his cold forehead. Days and weeks pass on, and it is not discovered that the number of victims is diminished. Putrefaction alone extorts the last favour from his tyrants—to be shovelled into the snow.

Ben. Stop, tedious murderer! No more of they slow poison! Give me a dagger!

Crus. Full many a one already in despair, has plunged the dagger deep into his breast, and his destroyers only laughed. None have yet dared to indulge a hope—I do not say by death or royal clemency—but by prudence, courage, and united exertion, to work out our deliverance. It was reserved for thee—Count Benyowsky—Peer of Hungary—Husband—Father—Hero!

Ben. (*With animation.*) Here I am! speak—what will you have me do?

Crus. Grey heads have only words, men deal in actions.

Ben. Fuel enough to my ardour! say, what shall—what can I do?

Crus. Liberate thyself and us.

Ben. Command my sword, and assist me with your counsel.

Crus. Nature has formed you to command: you want not my wisdom, but my caution. That shall faithfully attend you in all your dangers.

Ben. But how? I am still in the dark. Human might has combined with all powerful nature to thwart us. On this side, desart wastes and boundless fields of snow—on that, trackless seas bar us from the habitable world. Without ships, without a guide, without arms, without provisions—struggling to day with men, to morrow with famine—to-day free, to-morrow dead.

Crus. Dead and free—well! and if it were so—

Ben. Right, old man! speak on.

Crus. We play a noble game, much to win, nought but life to lose.

Ben. 'Tis well! shew me now the minuter parts of your great plan. (*Crustiew opens a small cupboard, takes out a book and gives it to Benyowsky, who opens it and reads.*) "Anson's voyage round the world." What is this for?

Crus. You have pronounced the name of a friend. At my arrival the barbarians ransacked all my pockets; the little money I

had about me, with other trifles, was a prey to their rapacity. I trembled—they laughed me to scorn—the fools did not know that I trembled for my books. Three friends have been the fraternal companions of my banishment; *Anson*, *Plato*, and *Plutarch*; to the second I owe my belief in a God and a better world to come; the third has described to me the heroes of Greece, and taught me to feel the power and dignity of man. But Anson—Ah, Benyowsky!—(*Pointing to the book.*) 'Twas Anson taught me hope.

Ben. Ha! how so?

Crus. (*With youthful energy, and an air of secresy and confidence.*) To fly! to fly to the Isles of Marian! This great navigator has shewn me the possibility of it. The Island Tinian—A terrestrial paradise! Free! free! a mild climate! a new created sun! harmless inhabitants, wholesome fruits—and liberty! tranquillity!—Ah, Benyowsky! liberate yourself and us!

Ben. In wondering rapture I look up to your giant soul. Give me your hand! I will do it!—With this hand I devote to you my life: death or liberty dissolves this union. Embrace me! close fraternally! as misery and despair embrace each other.

Crus. Not so, you are our chief! (*He kneels down.*) I swear to you the oath of fidelity and submission!

Ben. (*Sinking down in his arms.*) I will recompense this confidence: I will conquer or fall. But at my fall Kamtschatka's land shall tremble.

Crus. Enough! the brethren of our union await the signal.

(*He goes to the door and pulls several times a rope which hangs down from the roof, upon which the sound of a bell is heard.*)

Ben. What are you doing?

Crus. Come to the window and see! They are flocking hither from all sides.

Ben. (*Looking out.*) Welcome sight! So the poor wretch, whose ship hangs on a rock, gazes on his deliverers approaching from the shore.

A great number of Exiles come on; amongst the rest STEPANOFF. *They salute each other by turns, and shake hands. The assembly forms a half circle; in the middle* CRUSTIEW and BENYOWSKY.

Crus. Friends! brothers! it is now many years since you chose my mature age for your guide through this path of sorrow, where thorns grow up without a rose. You have generally been satisfied with the aged Crustiew. Sometimes, indeed, you have called him cold and tardy, fearful and circumspect. When

your rash impatience gnawed its chain ; when you dashed your boisterous heads against the solid wall, and I called out after you "Hold! you but increase your misery :"—do you think I have felt less than you the weight of these fetters ? That my sighs and curses have been fewer ? My tears more scanty ?—I have like you, panted after freedom and deliverance. Brethren, the hour is come ! I renounce, solemnly, every privilege which your choice has confided to me. At our head stands a hero. (*Pointing to Benyowsky.*) A noble Hungarian, accustomed under Polish banners to war and victory. His arm shall rear the flag of liberty ! The fame of his actions will go before him—He is willing and he is able. Our tormentors shall tremble at his name, and tyrants fly before his sword. (*Confused murmurs amongst the assembly.*) Speak, Count Benyowsky. (*Silence.*)

Ben. Speak ? Let the clash of swords be our speech ! The oath of fidelity our morning greeting ! The shout of freedom our evening salutation ! Stronger are the bands of misfortune than the fetters of slavery ! Stronger than the fear of death !—You know not me, I know not you, but we are unfortunate—we are therefore brothers. Is there one among you who would more willingly shed his blood for all ? let him come forward ; —I will swear allegiance to him. My ambition asks no pre-eminence. Ah ! let me at your head climb the steep height, where flourishes the palm of liberty, though a fragment of the rock roll down and crush me. Whoever among you sees me waver, let him strike the sword of vengeance through my breast. With you to conquer or to die, is my fixed determination—So help me God ! (*Acclamations amongst the conspirators.*)

Crus. Well, then—you who think with me ; uncover your heads, and lift up your hands. (*All do it except Stepanoff.*) You alone, Stepanoff ?

Step. I alone ! Do you think your smooth tongue is a wire, to move us all like puppets ? Oh, I know well the power which oratory gives over the heart. You have spoken, I too will speak.

Crus. Speak then.

Step. Brothers, is this right ? I your countryman, stand here in competition with a foreigner, a heretic. I will not question his courage ; he is valiant, so am I ; you have heard of his deeds, mine you have witnessed. *Poles* have been obliged to send for an *Hungarian*, and to place him at their head—*we* are *Russians*. But he will shed his blood for you—so will I. Is the blood of a slave worth mentioning ? He will make a merit with you of his atchievements, mine are the free gift of fraternal affection. I should to morrow fight in your company on the same equal

terms, as I yesterday banqueted with you. Now then decide! (*Murmurs, many put on their caps again.*)

Crus. *Offers to speak.*)

Ben. (*Interrupting him.*) Hold! unanimity must be our support: individually we can do but little; united we may accomplish much. The chain becomes useless, if but one link be broken. The question is—what is to be done, and not who shall be head. We all thirst for liberty, indifferent who presents us the bowl, he or I. Stepanoff, you are a man of spirit. Give me your hand. Let no animosity, no envy dissolve this union. The will of our brethren is a law, to which I willingly submit myself.

Step. Enough said! (*To the confederates.*) How long will you be fixing your choice? (*A confused cry.*) Crustiew, old Crustiew shall decide.

Crus. (*Makes a signal with his hand, silence follows.*) Stepanoff is fierce as the forked lightning, which darts zigzag from the cloud, and blasts the righteous with the wicked. (*To Stepanoff.*) Wrinkle not your forehead, nor knit your brow at me: Our liberty is here at stake, and I must speak the truth—Brethren! the Persians used to drive elephants before them, to throw the enemy's army into confusion; but an elephant was never their leader—Do you understand me?

All. Benyowsky! Count Benyowsky! We choose him!

Step. Be it so! The elephant is taught to bend the knee.

Crus. (*Kneeling down.*) We swear to you.

All. (*Kneel down, and stretch out their right hand.*) We swear!

Crus. Fidelity unshaken, obedience unconditional! To the success of our great plan be all our powers devoted—and, if necessary, our lives. Let deep secresy enchain our tongues. The perjurer shall suffer death! Let no one hesitate to execute our just revenge, even should he be compelled to plunge the dagger into his own brother's heart.

All. So swear we all!

Crus. If by misfortune or by treachery any one of us should be doomed to languish in a dungeon, let no torture extort from him a confession; sooner let him bite off his tongue, and spit it in the hangman's face; sooner let poison or the dagger cheat his tyrants of their victim, and his grave be the grave also of our secret.

All. So swear we all.

Crus. It is finished. (*All rise up.*)

Benyowsky. (*Kneels down, and gives Crustiew both his hands.*) From thy hand I receive their oath; in thy hand pledge I mine.

Crus. In God's name! (*A solemn silence.*) Brethren, at the hour of midnight assemble in the chapel, to seal this solemn confederacy at the altar.

Centinel at the door, (*Hastily*) A Servant from the governor is just coming into the house.

Crus. (*With anxiety.*) Our numerous assembly will create suspicion.

Ben. Sing, brethren, sing! The first song the best. (*A voice begins, the others fall in immediately.*)

Come, my comrades, join with me;
Think no more of slavery,
Let us, with a jocund lay
Drive the cares of life away.
Come, my comrades, merry be,
Think no more of slavery.

Enter Servant.

Servant. Zounds, you are very merry here.

Crus. Welcome! Will you sing with us?

Serv. I have no time. Which of you is Count Benyowsky?

Ben. I am.

Serv. The governor expects you.

Ben. I am coming.

Serv. Farewell. (*Exit.*)

Ben. Let every one of you return to his business as before. Let no look, no word, betray any thing extraordinary. Go singly. Don't assemble in little parties, and lay your heads together in the streets. When alone, do not keep your eyes fixed, as if you were brooding over matters of consequence. Let neither murmur nor insolence, complaint nor hope, escape you—Farewell. Reflect upon your oath; I take Heaven to witness mine. (*Exit.*

All. Talking one to another.) A valiant man! a hero! he will deliver us. Let us only be prudent and secret. Away to the chace! to the chace! (*Exeunt omnes, except Crustiew and Stepanoff.*)

Crus. (*Calling after them.*) At midnight we meet again. (*Stepanoff remains standing in a corner with folded arms, his eyes fixed gloomily upon the ground. Crustiew examining him suspiciously and silently.*) Stepanoff!

Step. (*Starting.*) Ah! are you not yet absent?

Crus. You seem rather absent just at this moment.

Step. I!—However, I seem not always what I am, but by Heavens I am always what I profess to be.

Crus. What is the matter with you, savage ?

Step. Call me rather wild beast. You are a shrewd old man, Crustiew, well informed, and conversant with books. You know the world, from the worm to the elephant, but your memory is good for nothing. One material thing you have forgotten.

Crus. And that is——

Step. When the elephants were irritated, did they not very often turn against their own army, and was not the consequence devastation and death ? (*Exit hastily.*)

Crus. (*Looking after him a long while, then shaking his head thoughtfully.*) Then cankered is the blossom of our freedom. *Exit.*

SCENE.—ATHANASIA'S *Apartment*; *a book and a chess-board upon the table.*

Enter ATHANASIA *and* THEODORA.

Athan. Has my father sent ?

Theo. Long ago.

Athan. And he is not here yet ?

Theo. Good Heavens, let him be master of all sciences, he can't fly.

Athan. (*Walking up and down, much disturbed.*) How strange ! I know not what I wish—It is still early, is it not, Theodora ?

Theo. Almost noon.

Athan. (*Going to the looking glass.*) I am not dressed yet.

Theo. Did not I tell you so a long while ago ? You are all forgetfulness do-day.

Athan. Forgetfulness !—I am all thought, you mean.

Theo. Yes, as you were this morning, when you poured coffee instead of milk into your tea, and drank it off without making a wry face.

Athan. (*At the looking glass.*) My hair too is all in disorder.

Theo. You have not slept a wink ; you did nothing but toss about the whole night long.

Athan. Whom did my father send ?

Theo. Corporal Iwan.

Athan. That old snail.

Theo. (*Looking out of the window.*) There he comes already.

Athan. (*Hastily turning round.*) Who ?

Theo. (*Smiling.*) A man, a demi-god ! and I know not what besides.

Athan. (*Hastens to the window.*) He does not look up.

Theo. You should not look down.

Athan. Can you guess how I feel just now ?

Theo. Perhaps like——

Athan. As if we were already old acquaintances.

Theo. Madam ! what will be the end of this ?

Athan. I never have thought so little on futurity as to-day.

Theo. So much the worse.

Athan. Hush ! I hear my father's voice ?

Theo. Farewell to advice and moralizing ! (*Athanasia throws herself into an arm chair, seizes a book, and pretends to be reading very attentively ; Theodora contemplating her suspiciously.*) Most excellent ! simplicity personified ! Oh ! what a precious thing is a woman's heart ! Perpetual calm without, and storm within. (*She looks over Athanasia's shoulder, takes the book out of her hand, laughing, turns it, and gives it her again.*) Why you are holding the book the wrong end upwards. Ha ! ha ! ha ! (*She runs into a side chamber.*)

Athan. (*Alone.*) The letters swim before my eyes. (*Looking towards the door,*) And my heart flies to meet him.

Enter the GOVERNOR *and* BENYOWSKY.

Gov. Here is my daughter. (*Athanasia bows reservedly.*) I repeat my request. Time, as the proverb runs, will make lovers, or produce learned men, according as the head or heart is in want of employment. My daughter's heart is her father's ; with her head do as you please. The garden is wild, but the soil good.

Ben. My learning is confined, I was bred a soldier. To arrange battles, or ribbands ; to pitch a camp, or make bonnets ; to sketch out a chart, or a pattern for embroidery, are very different things.

Athan. The modesty of my apparel, Count, refutes that apology.

Ben. Modesty and beauty are lovely sisters.

Athan. If you will make me blush, I must run away.

Ben. A threat, at which truth itself is struck dumb.

Gov. Well, my daughter ; we must be grateful. Count Benyowsky will cultivate your mind ; it must be your part to make his fetters easy.

Athan. Most gladly.

Gov. He will teach you French and the harp ; you will share with him, as a sister, the little amusements which our sep-

aration from the world still allows us. I absolve you, Count, from all public labour. Your maintenance is my care.

Ben. My warmest thanks——

Gov. Hold! which of us is the gainer by this bargain, you or I?—For the present I leave the teacher with his scholar, and expect him afterwards to a game at chess. (*Exit.*

Athan. (*Pauses. Embarrassed, with down-cast looks.*) I fear the scholar will disgrace the teacher.

Ben. (*Embarressed.*) Because she will too soon excel him.

Athan. But have you a great deal of patience?

Ben. What a question to a slave!

Athan. To think that joy and sorrow should be ever so inseparably united! One flower fades—its neighbour thrives in its remains. Your lot, Count, is bitter, but it sweetens ours. To alleviate your sufferings is our duty—our duty! ah! how came I by that cold word?—Be it our joy!

Ben. (*In joyful surprise.*) My God! I hear a language which had become quite foreign to my ears.

Athan. This country is indeed wild and cold: our flowers are without fragrance, our fruits are sour, our men savage and rude.

Ben. Ah, lady! Man is the only fruit which grows alike in all climates—weeds thrive every where.

Athan. Why weeds only?

Ben. Because it is not worth while to mention the few grains of wheat which grow up amongst them.

Athan. Your speech shews that you have suffered much misfortune.

Ben. Much! Oh! yes; one misfortune may be much. I am a slave.

Athan. We will make your slavery tolerable.

Ben. (*Very seriously.*) Slavery is never tolerable—(*Suddenly assuming an air of gallantry.*) That of love, perhaps, excepted.

Athan. (*Lively.*) There is no slavery in love.

Ben. Is love, then, known too in Kamtschatka?

Athan. Why we *live*, too, in Kamtschatka.

Ben. But, perhaps, without love as without sun.

Athan. Aye! but what the warmth of the sun fails to extract, the poet,s warm imagination can produce. We read when we can: we read and feel, If we had but more good books in our language!—I have long wished to learn French. You have promised my father——

Ben. What my powers are capable of.

Athan. Shall we begin?

Ben. Willingly; but without book?

Athan. 'Tis not from books, 'tis from you I would learn.

Ben. But how, when the teacher is struck dumb at the presence of his scholar.

Athan. Because he has no book—You look so hard at me, Count! your eyes express what I never yet read in any book.

Ben. (*Embarrassed.*) Why must the fair sex always take a pleasure in diverting themselves with the embarrassments of a soldier.

Athan. Because it flatters our weakness, and does honour to our weapons. But away with this nonsense! We shall easily manage without a book. Do you tell me words, and I will pronounce them after you as well as I can.

Ben. Words!

Athan. I will learn a dozen to-day, and a dozen to-morrow; in course of time I shall be able to chatter French with you. How do you call, for instance, *the heart?*

Ben. *Le cœur.*

Athan. *Le cœur—le cœur*—see now, I know that already, *Le cœur*—How then would you say *the heart beats?*

Ben. *Le cœur palpite.*

Athan. *Le cœur palpite.* Ah—that is charming! (*Laying her hand upon her heart, with a sigh.*) *Le cœur palpite.* I am an apt scholar—I feel what I learn.

Ben. (*Embarrassed.*) I had almost forgotten that his Excellency, your father, invited me to a game at chess. I must entreat you to dismiss me for to-day.

Athan. Not so; do you call this giving a lesson?

Ben. (*Significantly.*) A full lesson, lady.

Athan. Well, but—am I then so tiresome?

Ben. For Heaven's sake, forget not that I am but a poor exile; and let me also never forgot that.

Athan Why not? I will not banish you. You have fought against the Russians, what is that to me? You have been taken prisoner, what is that to me? You have been brought hither—Ah! that, indeed, is something to me.

Ben. Is it indeed? What employment do you follow here?

Athan. The sweet employment of consoling the afflicted.

Ben. (*Deeply affected.*) Nature, I see, has here, too, been just. Though she has denied the fields their verdure, yet she has united all her blessings in one amiable soul. Kamtschatka is no desart.

Athan. Friendship, like the swallow, builds its nest everywhere. Happiness is no butterfly, fluttering from flower to flower, and in the winter chilled. It lives, too, under the north pole.

Ben. Heavens! what a flower has this sun unfolded!

Athan. Would you make me vain? But I know how to take this compliment. On a barren heath even the little meadow flower can please.

Ben. How poor is art compared with nature!

Athan. Does my frankness please you?

Ben. May I be allowed to feel a pleasure in it?

Athan. Strange man! so bold of eye, so timorous in language.

Ben. Oh, then! let the discretion of my language, be an apology for the boldness of my eye—A word still fluttering on the tongue, and a stone in the hand, are both harmless; but has the word escaped—is the stone thrown—who shall answer for the consequences?—Your father expects me.—I thank you, lady, for the fresh blossom which your hand has woven in the faded garland of my happiness. I thank you, that I dare now again be proud—proud of your friendship. This abundance of your goodness I owe to my misfortune. Who could misunderstand this noble sensibility? Who could maliciously interpret it?—To you I consecrate each sentiment which the heart of a slave dare confess. (*He bows respectfully and withdraws.*)

Athan. (*Looks after him for a long while silently: walks up and down in much agitation; takes up the book, turns over the leaves, and throws it away again. She then goes thoughtfully to the chess-board, and plays, mechanically; with the pieces; then sighs, lays her hand upon her heart, and exclaims:* Le cœur palpite!

ACT III.

CRUSTIEW'S *Apartment.*

Crustiew. (*Alone at the window.*) WHERE can he be delaying?—His presence gives life to our whole society; the plants begin to bud and shoot; his fostering activity must bring them to maturity.

Enter STEPANOFF, *intoxicated, with a bottle and glass in his hand.*

Step. Good-day to you, old man! Here's to the health of all talkative chambermaids. (*Drinks.*)

Crus. What do you mean by that?

Step. Whether it will be important or not depends on circumstances. I have made a precious discovery, and I am getting drunk upon it.

Crus. The cause of your drunkenness you carry in your hands.

Step. Nonsense! fill my head with fire instead of brains; and I shall be sober in comparison of this intoxication.

Crus. Extravagant folly!

Step. Do you know the Cossack Kudrin?

Crus. A drunkard's question; is he not one of our associates?

Step. Trust him not, he is the slave of a woman. He is in love with Theodora, Athanasia's attendant.

Crus. What is that to me?

Step. He keeps nothing secret from her; nor she from him. Ha! ha! ha!

Crus. I do not understand you.

Step. Thank you, Satan, for this service! (*He fills the glass and drinks.*) Here's a health to the devil.

Crus. Blasphemous wretch! your intoxication is disgusting.

Step. Now I am in the humour I like. (*He puts the bottle and glass upon the table.*) There, you may drink the remainder.

Crus. Go, and lay yourself down.

Step. To sleep—aye, why not? You would with pleasure see me always asleep. (*Sneeringly.*) Good-night old man! (*Exit.*

Crus. What riddle has the wild fool in his head? Confused as his words were, they seemed to indicate more than mere intoxication.

BENYOWSKY *enters hastily.*

Ben. I have a great deal to say to you.

Crus. And I to you.

Ben. Love deals the cards, and the game is won.

Crus. What does that mean?

Ben. Either my knowledge of men, or my knowledge of women deceives me, or Athanasia loves me.

Crus. (*Shakes his head, laughing.*) This love has, like a mushroom, sprung up in one night.

Ben. Is not love always an unexpected visitor? Did you ever hear that preparations were made to receive him?

Crus. Well, then—to what does this lead?

Ben. Cannot you guess?

Crus. Will you marry her?

Ben. I am married already.

Crus. Will you seduce her?

Ben. Shame on such a question!

Crus. Will you return her love?

Ben. I cannot—alas! I know not how to act.

Crus. Well.

Ben. Advise me.

Crus. I do not give advice when a person is determined.

Ben. Determined!

Crus. Ask yourself: the blooming girl pleases you.

Ben. (*A moment lost in thought, then shrugging his shoulders.*) If I look into my heart ———

Crus. What would you find?

Ben. (*After a pause.*) Sensuality and vanity; desire and love of novelty.

Crus. Vanity is an idol, to which many an innocent heart has been sacrificed.

Ben. Our liberty and advantage are my only inducements.

Crus. Right, if you feel yourself firm enough not to overleap the proper boundaries. But not if you wish to build our happiness upon the misery of a harmless creature.

Ben. Never!

Crus. I am an old man, and superstition is the privilege of old age. Even if our plan should succeed by the sacrifice of an innocent, I would rather prefer slavery under the whip of the executioner, to liberty under the scourge of conscience. As often as a storm should menace us upon the ocean, I should anxiously exclaim—Behold the vengeance of the Almighty!—Swear, therefore, to me that you will not violate Athanasia's honour!

Ben. Fie! this horrid thought has never tempted me. I swear to you.

Crus. Well, then, you may continue to cherish her hopes. A half uttered word, a fearful glance, may lull her heart into sweet dreams. When we are gone, these will pass away. Every thing is forgotten in this world but lost innocence—In the mean time throw a deep veil over this secret. Do not let it become the talk of the conspirators. Beware of Stepanoff.

Ben. Why?

Crus. Because he loves the girl even to madness.

Ben. Is he acquainted with her?

Crus. No farther than the rest of us.

Ben. Is she acquainted with him?

Crus. I doubt she is not.

Ben. Has he spoken to her?

Crus. Never.

Ben. And yet in love?

Crus. As a knight-errant with his princess.—Now a word to the business about which I have been, in the meantime, em-

ployed. I have met with much success and much disappointment.

Ben. First—as to the success?

Crus. It exceeds the disappointment;—Tschulosnikoff sailed to the Aleutian Islands to catch sea-otters. Eight and twenty hunters served under him. They are returned, and are dissatisfied; the crew is gained over to our interest, and the ship is at our service.

Ben. The voice of an angel!

Crus. They assemble at midnight in the chapel, to plight their faith to us by an oath.

Ben. You have succeeded in a masterly manner—Ah, Crustiew! my head resembles a raree show. The pictures of imagination pass before me in variegated colours. Already I fancy myself in China, Japan, the Indies! already do we sail round the Cape of Good Hope!—Hope! daughter of heaven!

Crus. Be not so hasty; cover the fire with ashes; we are still far from the goal.

Ben. The way is even; the rocks are left behind.

Crus. And suddenly, perhaps, upon this even way, we shall sink into a whirlpool; malice peeps out from every chink; the jealous listen in every corner; he is a fool who seeks his enemies upon the high road—they lie concealed behind the bushes—they suffer the unwary traveller to pass by, and then strike him from behind.

Ben. Every one approaches me with respect.

Crus. So much the worse! The colours they display will make you too secure—Many hate you; for there are always persons discerning enough to feel the superiority of a great spirit, and malignant enough to envy it. Many hate you on account of the large sums they have lost to you at chess. For instance, Kasarinoff.

Ben. What! the silly merchant?

Crus. He lies in wait for you.

Ben. He? You are mistaken. This very morning he sent me a present of tea and sugar.

Crus. Be upon your guard; he sweetens his knavery.

Ben. Mistrustful old man! Do not make men appear worse than they are: mistrust has already stifled many a noble action, and turned aside many an honourable soul.

Crus. Caution is not mistrust.

Enter WASILI.

Wasili. Alas, what a misfortune!

Ben. Speak!

Wasili. Our little shepherd's dog, Sabac, is dead.

SCENE—*An Apartment of the* GOVERNOR'S.

(ATHANASIA *enters fearfully.*)

Athan. At length I am alone. Theodora is always behind me, always talking. Ah! love is eloquent, but not talkative. Poor maiden! if thy mother were but alive, she would understand thee. This heart wants relief. He is noble; he shall know what is going forward here. Confidence begets generosity! The noble mind is disarmed by the confession, "I am in your power."—Hush! I hear somebody upon the stairs—a hasty step—it is his—

(*Enter* STEPANOFF.)

Ah, no! the senses have deceived the heart—Do you want my father?

Step. You, beautiful lady.

Athan. What do you want?

Step. More than God is willing to grant me, your love.

Athan. Are you out of your senses?

Step. I shall be so, if you reject me.

Athan. It does not become me to hear you. (*Going.*)

Step. Stay, for God's sake! Hear me to the end, and let your goodness and humanity direct you in your determination. I am indeed but an exile, the outcast of humanity. For a rash indiscretion of youth, I was banished. My birth is equal to yours. My heart worthy of yours. An accident my loose these chains; your fetters I will wear forever. Beautiful lady look kindly on me, and a beam of hope will illume the nightly gloom of my life.

Athan. Enough! I cannot make any answer to this confession; though, ont of compassion, I will conceal this step from my father. (*Going.*)

Step. Stop! that the voice of love and of truth may speak to your heart. When I was dragged hither in chains, seven years ago, and forced, for the first time, to work on the fortifications, my powers, unaccustomed to the labour of a slave, failed me. Worn out with toil, and stretched upon the rampart, I wished for death. At that moment you came along the streets, led by the hand of your good mother. Athanasia Alexiewna! you were then a little girl. With anxiety you shrunk back, when you saw me extended helpless upon the ground; you clung to your mother, and entreated her, "Mother! give the poor man something!" Your mother gave me a piece of money; and I, in return, gave you my heart—Alas! you are now grown up, and the time has served only to increase my

ove. Years are past, yet I still see the lovely angel, as if it had been yesterday. The young sprig of gratitude I thought to nourish, and conceal it in my heart. Alas! the fruit is love!—Do not condemn me. Do not drive me to despair. I desire nothing—I ask for nothing. No oath, no promise which shall bind you—only the hope, that, when fate again smiles upon me, you also may smile upon me.

Athan. I pity you from my soul; but feed you with vain hopes I cannot, and I will not.

Step. You can, and you will not. (*Bitterly.*) You cannot, because you will not.

Athan. To whom am I accountable for the state of my heart?

Step. Another flame glows beneath these ashes.

Athan. Do you derive this audacity from my goodness.

Step. The charm of novelty has dazzled your youthful heart.

Athan. Away!

Step. The flowery speeches of a boaster have infatuated you.

Athan. Be gone, madman! I wish to be alone.

Step. Do you expect a visit, lady? Will he come?

Athan. Who?

Step. The happy man, for whose sake I am trampled in the dust.

Athan. Must I call my father?

Step. Do what you will; my life is no longer valuable: the beautiful airy fabric of my hopes, which I have been building for years, is destroyed. I will not weep, and I cannot pray. Only a fool weeps, prays or curses. To the man of spirit, despair offers other means. Should he be preserved for ridicule and contempt, like Sampson, he at last seizes, with powerful grasp, the pillars of the temple, and drags them, with a crash, upon himself and his enemies.

Athan. You rage.

Step. Not yet; though soon perhaps I may. I will watch observe, and mark down every one of your looks; each half involuntary motion I will intercept and finish. Love, jealousy, despair, shall sharpen my perceptions; and if Satan shall procure me the happiness to see what I wish for—Ha! then a lively play shall begin! upon my grave shall the furies brandish your nuptial torch.

Athan. Alas! how shall I escape this madman?

Enter BENYOWSKY.

(*Athanasia* (*joyfully running towards him.*) Ha! Count Benyowsky!

Step. There he is! Hell and the devil! I have enough! Farewel, beautiful lady! I am now going. You see I know when to take my leave—and to die—though not unrevenged! (*He rushes out.*)

Ben. What means this? you tremble, and he rages!

Athan. I tremble indeed.

Ben, Wherefore?

Athan. I will complain to my father.

Ben. Of what?

Athan. No, I will not.

Ben What will you not

Athan. I pity him; he is out of his senses?

Ben. Out of his senses!

Athan. He loves me.

Ben. Is he for that reason out of his senses?

Athan. An exile——

Ben. [*With asperity.*] Right, lady, that I had almost forgotten.

Athan. (*Embarrassed.*) Not because he is an exile—no—that I would not say.

Ben. Though it was so true

Athan. But what is true is not always to be spoken. Cannot an exile also be amiable?

Ben. Possibly he can, but he durst not.

Athan. An exile may; but not *he*—*he* durst not.

Ben. (*Abruptly.*) Where is your father? I must speak to him.

Athan. He is—dear Count, I have offended you.

Ben. Offended me! how so?

Athan. You are also an exile.

Ben. Alas!

Athan. I so easily forgot that.

Ben. I never shall forget it.

Athan. Indeed—because your reason has always the command of your passions.

Ben. You should praise me for that.

Athan. Willingly with the mouth, but the heart—

Ben. The heart would fain be flattered.

Athan. (*Bashfully.*) You are no flatterer.

Ben (*Firmly.*) No.

Athan. There are also truths, which the heart likes to hear.

Ben. Not every truth is proper to be spoken.

Athan At least, not by every one.

Ben. True, lady.

Athan. I mean Stepanoff.

Ben. And his equal.

Athan. Who is his equal ?

Ben. Every exile.

Athan. Every one !—I understand you. (*With a suppressed sigh.*) Natural coldness is not virtue.

Ben. But to suffer and be silent is merit.

Athan. Or obstinacy ; declare always what you feel, said my mother, and you will never feel what you ought not.

Ben. This one beautiful maxim is a picture of your mother.

Athan. She has bequeathed me many of them. Were she alive—Alas ! upon yonder hill is her grave, covered with snow —there will I, when the first blossom of Spring appears, whisper my secret to the earth. (*A pause.*) You do not ask me for my secret.

Ben. I have no right to ask you.

Athan. You are my tutor—I dare and must confide in you. Advise me.

Ben. In what ?

Athan. If I loved Stepanoff ?

Ben. Well.

Athan. What ought I to do ?

Ben. To declare yourself to your father.

Athan. And then—

Ben. If he would, by his power, restore liberty to your beloved, then you might, without a blush, give him your hand.

Athan You have spoken to my soul.

Ben. Happy Stepanoff !

Athan. Indeed ! dear Count ! would you think him happy whom I love ?

Ben. If he possess a feeling heart.

Athan. (*Inclining timidly towards him, and hiding her face on his shoulder.*) Do you possess it ? (*Benyowsky agitated.*) Yes or no.

Ben. Amiable innocence !

Athan. Yes or no. (*Benyowsky pressing her involuntarily to his breast.*) I fly to my father ! (*She runs out.*

Ben. Athanasia, whither are you going ? O God, what is all this ! the heavenly charm of innocence over-whelmed (*Striking his forehead.*) Emelia ! my wife !

(*Enter* HETTMAN.)

Hett. Ah ! the very man I wanted !

Ben. (*Embarrassed.*) Has any one inquired for me ?

Hett. Inquired ?—They have sought for you every where.

Ben. Who ?

Hett. I,—having to speak of very important matters with you.

Ben. Another time. I came hither upon business of importance. (*Going.*)

Hett. Stay—not a step! On this minute depends, perhaps, the fate of centuries.

Ben. (*Aside.*) Intolerable blockhead!—(*Aloud.*) What are your commands?

Hett. (*With a smile of importance.*) A trifle. (*After a solemn pause.*) Half the world!

Ben. Half the world! (*Aside.*) He too is out of his senses.

Hett. You start. Ha! here is a head, and in this head run wonderful things.

Ben. So I hear.

Hett. Who conquered Kamtschatka? A Cossack. Who is Hettman the Cossack?—I.

Ben. That I know, but—

Hett. Silence—no talking! promise me profound secresy with regard to all I have just now confided to you.

Ben. (*Smiling.*) Willingly.

Hett. I have a little plan,—when I say a little plan, I mean a great one. In short—(*Drawing him aside.*) I will settle a colony upon the Aleutian islands.

Ben. Indeed!

Hett. You shall assist me in bringing this sketch to perfection.

Ben. Ah!

Hett. When I say to *perfection*, I refer to the *pen*; for as to the sword, a Cossack does not want assistance. You shall persuade the governor to propose it to the Empress.

Ben. Proceed.

Hett. Do you not perceive? I make you all free and happy—the governor promoted from this place to Ochozk; you, made governor Kamtschatka; I regent of the Aleutian islands; and, before you are aware of it, conqueror of California.

Ben. Bravo! the plan is inimitable.

Hett. Is it not? (*With gravity.*) I wish you joy, governor of Kamtschatka.

Ben. (*With the same gravity.*) I thank your Californian Majesty; though I should rather wish, if it please you, that you would nominate me your prime minister and general in chief.

Hett. This, too, dear Count, shall be granted to you.

Ben. I am fully sensible of your kindness—

Hett. So am I. I am so sensible of it that I must laugh at seeing you in idea at the head of my troops. Well! an alliance offensive and defensive. (*Extending his hand.*)

Ben. (*Shaking it.*) Be it so. (*Aside.*) Bear with a fool if he can be useful to you.

(*Enter* GOVERNOR.)

Gov. Welcome, Count! where is my daughter?

Ben. She was here just now.

Gov. Theodora told me that she was inquiring for me.

Hett. (*With an air of importance.*) We have, in the mean time, found a kingdom!

Ben. Before we take possession of it, I demand justice.

Gov. How so?

Ben. A mad fellow, Tschulosnikoff, has attacked me in my hut, and irritated me by the greatest insults, till at last I kicked him out of doors.

Gov. The occasion?

Ben. I wished to hire his crew to assist in building a school room: the fool says, that I wanted to excite a mutiny, and to engage his people in it.

Gov. As stupid as malicious.

Hett. We must give the rascal the cat.

Gov. I will send for him,

Ben. They envy me the honour of your confidence; and, on that account, persecute me with hatred, and threaten me with assassination.

Gov. Assassination!

Ben. Here is the proof. (*He produces the sugar.*) Under the mask of friendship, the merchant Kasarinoff, sent me poisoned sugar. A dog that ate of it, died upon the spot.

Gov. Is it possible? give it to me. (*He takes the sugar.*)

Hett. The knout for the rascal!

(GOVERNOR *rings, and Servant enters.*)

Gov. Send immediately for Tschulosnikoff and Kasarinoff.

Servant. Tschulosnikoff is already in the anti-chamber, and requests an audience.

Gov. Tell him to come in.

(*Servant opens the door and beckons Tschulosnikoff.*)

Tschu. (*Entering.*) Please your Excellency, I come

Gov. With a bold countenance I see.

Hett. You are a worthless fellow!

Tschu. I accuse this stranger of high treason.

Hett. What! my minister!

Gov. Dare you calumniate a man, who, even in fetters, has done more for the government than an hundred free scoundrels like yourself?

Tschu. I have proofs—

Gov. Silence! you have no sense of any thing great and good. You adhere to your stupidity like the beetle to the

dunghill. I know this man.—I am informed of all he undertakes; and if any one dare to throw impediments in his way, the sun shall have shone upon him for the last time.

Tschu. He excites sedition.

Gov. Be gone! I will hear no more; you owe him thanks, and you pay him with calumny. He would make your children men; and, brutes as ye are, ye would prevent him.

Tschu. But my pilot—

Gov. Silence and be gone!

Tschu. He has treated me ill.

Hett. He served you right.

Tschu. But, good God—

(GOVERNOR *rings, and Servant enters.*)

Gov. There! to the guard with that fellow.

Tschu. Very well. I am going. You will repent it, and (*To Benyowsky*) you shall soon feel my revenge. (*Exit, enraged.*)

Ben. He still threatens.

Gov. Ridiculous.

Hett. Forty cuts with the cat will cool his anger.

Gov. Be not disturbed, dear Count. I promise you satisfaction and security. Calumny can only shade a good conscience, as a black veil, the beautiful bosom. It shines through it. I know those half men; I know you also. Honour and life I would confide to you.

Hett. And California into the bargain.

Ben. (*Aside.*) This confidence is a reproach I was not prepared for.

Serv. The merchant Kasarinoff.

Gov. Let him come in.

Ser. (*Opens the door, and* KASARINOFF *enters.*)

Kas. Your Excellency has commanded—

Gov. Bring us tea—Come nearer, my dear Kasarinoff. I hear you are industrious and careful. Your trade is extensive; you deserve encouragement.

Kas. I only wish for your favour.

Gov. It is your due. A great merchant is a great man. The monarch surveys his dominions; the merchant, the world. With the right hand he touches Asia, and with the left America. By a stroke of the pen, he unites the most distant parts of the world, makes lemons abound in Kamtschatka, and discovers gold in the bowels of the earth. Let honour be shown to him who deserves honour. Seat yourself near to me, my dear Kasarinoff; let us drink a cup of tea together, and talk of business. (*He pours out the tea himself.*) This tea—I

received it from Irkuzk; it is caravan-tea. You understand this article of trade. It is very good. I must thankfully acknowledge that my friends load me with presents. (*He puts some sugar into Kasarinoff's cup.*) This suger, for instance, is it not fine and white? A gift from Count Benyowsky. (*He puts in another piece.*) You deal likewise in sugar; taste it.

Kas. (*Embarrassed and anxiously.*) Please your excellency, it is not the hour at which I usually drink tea.

Gov. I entreat you, drink.

Kas. I am not at all fond of tea.

Gov. Perhaps not; but drink some to oblige me.

Kas. It makes me hot and uncomfortable.

Gov. Only one cup.

Kas. I must entreat you to excuse me.

Gov. (*Gravely.*) Drink, friend Kasarinoff! Do you think the tea is poisoned?

Kas. God forbid!

Gov. Then drink; I command you!

Kas. (*Takes the cup trembling.*) I have such an aversion to tea.

Gov. I will put more sugar in it; then it will not hurt you. (*He puts another piece of sugar into the cup.*)

Kas. (*Trembling,*) I!—ah!—(*He lets the cup fall.*)

Gov. (*Rises angrily.*) Ah! poisoner!

Kas. (*Falling upon his knees.*) Mercy!

Hett. The knout!

Gov. Then it is but too true; this bloody, villainous device! Count Benyowsky, pronounce his sentence, it shall be put in execution this very hour.

Kas. Mercy! Mercy!

Hett. The knout! The knout!

Ben. Do you leave the punishment of this man to me?

Gov. Entirely to you.

Ben. I have your word, that my sentence shall determine his fate.

Gov. You have.

Ben. Well, then—I pardon him.

Gov. How?

Hett. What?

Kas. (*Embracing his knees.*) God! what a man! (*With an inarticulate voice.*) I have no words—let these tears wash away my guilt.

Ben. Rise; go, and be my friend.

Gov. No, Count, I dare not consent to this.

Ben. I have your word.

Gov. Your action is noble, but—

Ben. If it is noble, so much the better: then your heart answers for your word.

Gov. (*Embraces him with emotion.*) I have esteemed you, now I admire you. (*To Kasarnoiff.*) Go, and make yourself worthy of his forgiveness.

Kas. (*Agitated.*) I cannot speak—I will fetch my children—they shall thank him. (*Exit.*

Hett. (*Extending his hand to Benyowsky.*) Friend, you have acted magnanimously, like a Cossack. I appoint you my criminal judge at California.

Athan. (*Rushes in, and throws her arms around her father.*) My dear father!

Gov. What's the matter?

Athan. At last I have found you.

Gov. What do you want?

Athan. Your consent.

Gov. To what?

Athan. To my happiness.

Gov. Is not your happiness my wish! Speak.

Athan. I am in love.

Gov. In love.

Ben. (*Very much embarrassed.*) I will take my leave.

Athan. Stay, Count Benyowsky, I need not to be ashamed of my love.

Gov. I am astonished! so suddenly—

Hett. I have perceived nothing of it.

Athan. (*Goes to Benyowsky, seizes his hand, and turns herself to her father.*) Your blessing, dear father!

Gov. How! you love the Count?

Athan. Whom else could I love!

Hett. Well, well.

Gov. But do you consider—

Athan. I consider all; his magnanimity—your goodness—the last hours of my mother! Shall I repeat to you her dying words?—Yes, it was in this room, in this very room she expired. Upon this spot stood her bed; here you were sitting at the head, and here I kneeled at her feet. You wept—I sobbed—my mother groaned! In her last dying struggle she once more raised herself, pressed your hand, and spoke in broken accents—give my Athanasia the man of her heart.—Here he stands.—Dear father! give to your Athanasia this man of her heart!

Gov. Child, you surprise me.

Athan. (*Drawing Benyowsky along with her.*) Here, upon this spot, where my mother died, here we implore your blessing!

Gov. As soon as the Count shall once be free——

Athan. Will he not be free as soon as you please? Genius of my mother, descend! Influence my father's heart, that he may fulfil your last wish!

Hett. I should think, my good friend, you might without danger.

Athan. Danger! Can it be dangerous to recompense virtue?

Hett. The Ukase of Peter the First extends to many cases.*

Athan. A thousand blessings upon the ashes of Peter the Great, for this law!

Hett. The ship saved in the voyage from Ochozk.

Athan. Aye, indeed! that alone.

Hett. The introduction of the cultivation of corn in Lopotka.

Athan. Right, Hettman! oh! how amiable you are!

Hett. Yes, yes, the Cossacks are always amiable—If, moreover, we take into consideration the Aleutian Isles, California.

Athan. You do not speak a word, dear Benyowsky!

Ben. What can I say? I am racked by the thought, that your good father must believe I advised you to this step.

Athan. No, that you never did. No, my father, he did not. He has tormented my love-sick heart with his cool reason; he was so insensibly reasonable—so unfeelingly noble. —Dear father! you are unresolved. Here I kneel, where once I kneeled by the death-bed of my mother; here, where she gave me her last blessing; here must that blessing be fulfilled now or never!

Gov. Rise, Athanasia. Be it so; my gray-head obeys my heart. I venture something for you and him; but you deserve it—Count, you are free. The Chancellor shall execute the instrument in the proper form.—(*Embracing him.*) I embrace my son.

Ben. God! is it possible!

Athan. (*Kissing her father's hand.*) Oh, my good father! Happiness! Happiness! Thanks and happiness! How is it with me? My eyes, my heart so full—I must kiss you, dear Hettman! Benyowsky is free! he is free, and mine! Where is Theodora? The whole house shall partake of my happiness! The whole castle! The whole town! (*She puts a purse into Benyowsky's hand.*) This for the poor exiles—He is free, and mine! (*She rushes out.*)

Ben. (*Very much affected.*) Governor—

Gov. Why not father?

* A law of Peter I. empowering the governor, in certain cases, to give liberty to slaves.

Ben. If I am at present dumb——

Gov. I understand you.

Hett. Dumb? Fishes are dumb, because they drink water. We must empty a couple of bottles; they will unloose the tongue.

Gov. Right, Hettman; wine should be the companion of joy, as dew is of a fine morning:—Come.

Ben. The extremes of happiness and misery are nearly connected with each other: both are the cause of tears, not of words; both desire solitude. I must, I must take my leave for a few moments. (*Exit.*

Hett. Singular man! when I am happy I must drink.

Gov. Let him go; happiness is not to be found in the tankard.

Hett. Glass or tankard, the same to me! when I say happiness, it always implies thirst. By my good sword! I am as thirsty as a dog after a long chace.

Gov. Well, then, let us drink to the welfare of the young couple.

SERVANT *Enters.*

Serv. Tschulosnikoff has escaped from the guard.

Gov. Escaped! Fool! All Kamtschatka is but a prison.

Hett. The knout will overtake him.

Gov. (*To the Servant.*) Bring a bottle of wine.

Hett. One bottle! what are you thinking of? Bring four. If, upon Athanasia's wedding-day, the sea were changed into wine, a happy Cossack would empty it. (*Exeunt Omnes.*

(*The Scene changes to an open square under the window of the castle, towards evening: a balcony, and under the balcony a stone seat. Tschulosnikoff and his nephew Grigori enter.*)

Tschu. He must pass this way.

Grig. Dear uncle, what is the matter with you?

Tschu. Give me your knife.

Grig. What are you going to do?

Tschu. To revenge myself and die.

Grig. To revenge yourself? On whom?

Tschu. On Benyowsky.

Grig. What has he done to you?

Tschu. I shall go mad if I relate it again.

Grig. But think what you hazard.

Tschu. I hazard nothing. I send him before me to hell, that I may find a companion there.

Grig. Will you murder him?

Tschu. Give me your knife.

Grig. There it is.

Tschu. Is it sharp—yes.

Grig. But for God's sake!

Tschu. Reserve your prayers for the church, and go to the devil! I do not want you.

Grig. I cannot leave you.

Tschu. Then stay, and give the dog absolution.

Grig. It grows dark.

Tschu. So much the better.

Grig. Not long ago I met six of the guard, who were seeking you.

Tschu. Let them seek! They shall not find me till this knife has found the way to his heart.

Grig. I heard, just now, that Benyowsky has obtained his liberty.

Tschu. Has he?—

Grig. He is to be married to the governor's daughter.

Tschu. Indeed!

Grig. The marriage is, perhaps, at this moment celebrating, and you wait in vain.

Tschu. Then I will wait till the sun is burnt to a cinder—Hark! I hear him coming; retire to the wall.

Grig. Dear uncle!

Tschu. Go, or I will plunge the knife into your body! (*They separate.*)

Ben. (*Walking over the stage in deep thought.*) Athanasia! Emilia!

Tschu. (*Rushing forth.*) It is he! die! traitor! (*Throws himself upon Benyowsky.*)

Ben. (*Hearing his exclamation, turns round suddenly and seizes his arm. They struggle, Benyowsky calls aloud.*) Help! murder!

Tschu. Grigori, come to my assistance! *Grigori attacks Benyowsky; Kasarinoff appears with his two children in his hand, whom he leaves; and, throwing Tschulosnikoff to the ground, disarms him.—Benyowsky, in the mean time, makes himself master of Grigori.—Theodora appears on the balcony, mingles her cries with those of the combatants and children, and runs back.*)

Enter CORPORAL *with Guards.*

Cor. What is here? Be still! What is the matter here?—Ah! Tschulosnikoff, have we found you again?

Kas. He was going to assassinate the Count.

Ben. (*Losing Grigori.*) Run, young man, I will not injure you. (*Grigori runs away.*)

Cor. Was you not already ripe for the knout? Come along with us! march!

Tschu. Devil! (*He spits at Benyowsky.*) May God in heaven damn you! (*Exit with guard.*

Ben. (*Embraces his preserver.*) Kasarinoff!

Kas. You bade me to go and be your friend. You see I have obeyed you.

Ben. You have paid your debt honestly.

Kas. Here are my little ones;—they came to embrace your knees, and lisp you thanks. Yet fortune has enabled me to do more. It is a kindness in her to give a man an opportunity of shewing his gratitude.

Ben. Kasarinoff, my *friend!*—That title is not with me a word of trifling import——Farewel.

Kas. It is dark, and you are alone; I will accompany you.

Ben. I will accept your offer, as far as the river, if you please.

Kas. I will serve you till death. (*They go arm in arm, the children follow.*)

Hett. (*Coming from the other side, much intoxicated.*) Ha! ha!—check-mate!—What noise did I hear? (*He looks every where round.*) Nobody!—Nobody makes a noise here—when I say nobody, I mean a great number of men, who are run away—What can be the matter with Theodora?—What makes her scream?—Why does she disturb me at my bottle? Five glasses more, and five moves more upon the board—then we had both been check-mate! Ha! ha! ha!—(*He sinks upon the stone bench.*) This is a tolerably cool seat. When I say cool, I mean cold—How! The king of California is check-mate! Ha! ha! ha! (*Continues muttering to himself.*)

Kud. (*Enters with the Balalaika under his arm. He looks about him fearfully.*) At last all is quiet, and dark as the grave. The stars are gone to rest, wrapt up in gloomy snow-clouds. (*Going to the balcony.*) Hush! Theodora!—She is not on the balcony. Perhaps she has been there—I shall decoy the little bird. (*He tunes the Balalaika.*) My fingers are benumbed with cold. (*He breathes upon his hands.*) Now, now, that will do. The breath of a lover would melt icicles, and dissolve diamonds. (*He plays and sings.*)

Wake, my fair one, hither turn thee,
Bless thy true love's sight;
Sprites, ere now, and restless lovers.
Seek the silent night.

See thy anxious lover waiting,
Hasten to his arms;
Tho' the cold wind bites severely,
Love his bosom warms.

Tho' the stars refuse their twinkling,
Cynthia gives no ray;
Yet can love with cheerful splendor,
Chase the gloom away.

Then wake, my fair one, hither turn thee,
Bless thy true love's sight:
Sprites, ere now, and restless lovers,
Seek the silent night.*

Theo. (*Appearing on the balcony.*) Hush!

Kud. Hush!

Theo. Is it you?

Kud. I have been here a long time.

Theo. Dear Kudrin, the house is full of merriment.

Kud. So much the better.

Theo. My lady is going to be married.

Kud. To whom?

Theo. To Count Benyowsky.

Kud. Benyowsky!

Theo. And our roses too shall bloom.

Kud. Well, then, we shall take a voyage, all together, beyond the sea.

Theo. Why, you goose, travelling is not thought of now.

Kud. What then?

Theo. Marriage.

Kud. Then you do not know—and your lady does not know.

Theo. What do we not know?

Kud. And yet to be married—that is curious.

Theo. Speak.

Kud. Yes, if I dared.

Theo. Why dare you not?

Kud. Because I have taken a terrible oath.

Theo. Why—what about?

Kud. Can you keep a secret?

Theo. Like the grave.

Kud. Hear, then, dear Theodora; I came hither to persuade you—

Theo. To what?

Kud. To accompany me in our flight.

Theo. In what flight?

Kud. If you betray me we are all lost.

Theo. Silly man! Love and treachery never live under the same roof.

Kud. There is a great number of us, a very great number, both freemen and exiles. Count Benyowsky is our leader;

* From a favourite Romance, in a Russian Opera, called MELNIK.

we have a ship, we fly, God knows where, to a most beautiful country.

Theo. Are you dreaming, or is your brain turned.

Kud. Neither; it is all true, all prepared, and very shortly —will you go with me, Theodora?

Theo. But my lady—

Kud. Well, when the Count marries, her, he will certainly take her with him.

Theo. Incomprehensible!

Kud. What does that signify? Make yourself ready, pack up your all. Then huzza! we shall sail round the world.

Theo. But the governor.

Kud. He may stay, and play at chess with that old fool Hettman.

Hett. (*Starts up, and seizes Kudrin by the collar.*) Ha! Rascal! (*Theodora screams and runs away.*)

Kudrin. (*Sinks trembling upon his knees.*) Mercy! We are lost.

Hett. (*Holding him fast.*) Rascal, what did you say?

Kud. Ah! I am drunk, I know not what to say.

Hett. Treason! Benyowsky! my Californian minister.

Kud. I have been amongst the Kamtschatcans—they have made me drink.—My senses are quite gone.

Hett. Come along with me to the guard. (*He tries to drag him away.*)

Kud. Leave me, I entreat you, only till to-morrow morning.

Hett. Begone, rascal!

Kud. (*He pushes Hettman so violently that he falls.* Go to the devil! (*He runs away.*)

Hett. What! that to me? To Hettman? Halloo there, guard! Treason! Love intrigues! Flight! Conspiracy! (*He reels out.*)

ACT. IV.

CRUSTIEW, BATURIN, *and a party of* CONSPIRATORS, *in* CRUSTIEW'S *Apartment. Some stand in groupes, some walk up and down.*

First Conspirator. He does not yet return.

Second Con. It is already dark.

Crus. Be satisfied, he is certainly coming.

Third Con. Tschulosnikoff is bold.

Crus. Benyowsky, cunning.

First Con. The governor, rigorous.

Crus. But not suspicious.

Second Con. He will become so.

Crus. If so, the hour of deliverance is not far off.

First Con. I have sighed after it these ten years.

Second Con. I, seven.

Third Con. I, seventeen.

Crus. And I twenty-two. Conceive, brethren, if you can, the delightful spectacle, when we disembark on the coast of a foreign country, where no snow prevents us from kissing the ground, and the fertile earth imbibes our tears of joy. Hail! Hail! to our deliverer!

All. Hail to him!

Enter STEPANOFF, *hastily.*

Stepanoff. We are lost.

All. What is the matter?

Step. We are betrayed.

All. Betrayed!

Step. Your hero, Benyowsky, has obtained freedom for himself.

All. How so? Speak! declare!

Step. The governor is to give him his daughter in marriage.

Conspirators. Well.

Step. Well, blockheads! Consequently he has betrayed us.

Crus. This consequence is not clear to me.

Step. No! why is he free? The price must always be something of importance—a service to the state, and what service was in his power but that of turning traitor?—He can talk: with his tongue he has seduced us, and we resemble a swarm of bees enticed by false allurements—First he fooled the old man. (*Pointing to Crustiew*) And the old man has fooled us. With Russian blood he purchases his freedom, and with it he sprinkles his nuptial bed!—To-day he will see us dragged to the Scaffold, and to-morrow celebrate his marriage. Revenge! revenge on the traitor!

All. Revenge! revenge!

Step. We must die, but Benyowsky shall fall first.

All. He dies!

Crus. Be not so rash, brethren.

Step. What punishment did we denounce on perjury? Speak.

All. Death! death!

Crus. If he be guilty, he must die,—I myself, old as I am, will summon up the last remains my of vigour, to plunge the deadly steel into his breast. But you must hear him. Should this man be found a hypocrite—should that eye, replete with

virtue, be but the fictitious resemblance of it; then farewel my belief in honesty and faith! I believe him innocent—you must hear him!

Step. Speak on in his defence, old chatterer.

Crus. Not I, he himself must speak, you must hear him.

Step. Himself!—Do you think him such a fool as to venture to appear amongst us any more.

Enter BENYOWSKY.

Crus. Here he is.

Step. Ha! (*Draws his sword.*) To the ground with him!

All. (*Draw their swords.*) Cut down the traitor!

Crus. (*Throws himself upon Benyowsky.*) Through my breast then shall your swords find a passage. Retire, brethren! he is in your power, and you must hear him! Retire! He cannot escape you.

Baturin. Crustiew is right; surround the door.

Benyowsky. Let me speak, Crustiew. What do you require?

Step. Your life!

Ben. Have I not sacrificed it to obtain your freedom? Am I not a member of your body?

Step. An infectious ulcer. Defend yourself!

Ben. Wherefore?

Step. Are you free?

Ben. Yes!

Step. Will the governor give you his daughter in marriage?

Ben. Yes!

Step. Now, brethren! have I deceived you? What! Is farther testimony necessary? Revenge! revenge!

All. (*Brandish their swords.*) Revenge! revenge!

Crus. Hold!—You see, Benyowsky, we do not comprehend you: explain this riddle.

Ben. I guess your meaning. Should I appear here thus tranquil, if I were the character this villain would render me? Examine my countenance. Does treason harbour there? Read ye the pangs of conscience in my features?

Step. A very poor defence, truly.

Ben. Miserable babbler?—Hear me, brethren, and judge. I went to the governor. You know the reason. His daughter loves me. He loves his daughter. It is very natural that she should ask for my liberty;—very natural that the father should grant it. He embraced me as his son-in-law. How was I to act? Refuse this honour? Why? I must have given my reasons—and what reasons? Was not dissimulation, here, self-defence? Cannot my liberty be of two-fold benefit?

Step. Thou liest!

Ben. I despise you!—Brethren, I stand in the midst of you without any means of defence, and without arms. If I have betrayed you, in a few minutes the guard will surround our village. Then cut me to the ground.

Crus. He is innocent.

All. He is. (*They put up their swords.*)

Step. (*Raging*) Wilt thou, dissembling villain, always triumph? take thy sword, I challenge thee. God be judge between me and thee. If thy conscience be pure, stand forth.

Ben. Give me a sword!

Crus. By no means—we will not suffer it. Your life is valuable to us. Stepanoff is fired by jealousy.

Step. Benyowsky is a hero in words only.

Ben. (*Passionately.*) Give me a sword!

Bat. (*Steps between them.*) Hold!—I can no longer be silent. This man is the traitor. (*Pointing to Stepanoff, who appears thunderstruck.*)

All. What? What is that?

Bat. (*To Stepanoff.*) Look steadily in my face.

Step. (*Confused.*) What wilt thou with me?

Bat. See how the glowing cheek confesses his guilt. His blood is inflamed, but his tongue is silent. What do I want with you? I will tell what you would with me.

All. Speak! Speak!

Bat. A few hours ago, brethren—

Step. Believe him not, he lies.

Bat. He entered my hut in a rage—

Step. Fool, I was intoxicated.

Bat. Cursed Benyowsky.

Step. Men curse, old woman pray.

Bat. Wrote a treasonable letter.

Step. (*Spitefully.*) Have you read it?

Bat. I know the contents from your own mouth—

Step. Blockhead, I was only playing the fool with you.

Bat. I was to deliver the letter.

Step. You was dreaming.

Bat. It was big with Benyowsky's death and your destruction.

All. Go on—go on!

Bat. I refused; he prayed and threatened by turns. At last he threw a piece of gold upon the table to purchase my secrecy.

Step. Is the story to end soon?

Bat. He rushed out, I have not seen him since.

All. Betrayer! malefactor!

Step. He has been telling lies.

Conspirators. (*Drawing their swords.*) Down with him!

Ben. Hold! First disarm and bind him, and then hear his defence. (*First, second, and third Conspirators take Stepanoff's sword, and bind his hands. Stepanoff struggles in vain.*)

All. The letter! Where is the letter?

Ben. Stepanoff, you hear the demand of your associates; answer.

Step. (*Obstinately.*) I know of no letter.

Ben. Confess or tremble!

Step. (*With a glance of contempt.*) Tremble before thee?

Conspirators. Down with him!

Ben. Away! lead him to the next room, and there guard him.

Step. (*Gnashing his teeth, and following the guard.*) Will no devil come from hell to assist me?

Ben. Softly, brethren! As murder is soon committed, and one rash moment often entails upon us years of misery. Though Baturin's testimony be honest, you still want Stepanoff's confession.

Bat. I swear to the charge; may this hand be instantly withered, if the testimony on which I ground the accusation be false.

Ben. It is not sufficient. Have you read the letter yourself?

Bat. No.

Ben. I entreat you, brethren, to proceed with mildness. Pardon to an enemy is a seed that often produces a rich harvest. Let us content ourselves with terrifying him: perhaps we may extort his repentant confession.

Crus. Generous man! Be yourself his judge—act after your own pleasure.

Ben. Are you all satisfied?

Conspirators. Yes! Yes!

Ben. Well, then bring, me a cup of water. (*First Conspirator brings him a cup of water.*)

Ben. (*Puts the cup upon a table in the middle of the stage.*) I know the cause of Stepanoff's illness; I alone canbe his physician. Bring him here. (*First Conspirator brings in Stepanoff.*

Ben. Come nearer, Stepanoff. You are convicted of treason; yo have, like us, vowed death to the betrayer; declare you own sentence.

Step. My fate is in the hands of my enemy.

Ben. You are wrong. All your companions have condemned you—confess.

Step. Never.

Ben. You have but a few moments to live;—confess

Step. Never!
Ben. You hate me.
Step. I do.
Ben. What have I done to you?
Step. Nothing.
Ben. And yet you hate me.
Step. Yes.
Ben. And you will not confess?
Step. No.
Ben. Well, then, silence is confession. Here stands a cup with poison;—empty it.
Step. (*Spitefully looking round about him.*) Brethren, is that your will?
Conspirators. By all means!
Step. Will you sacrifice me to this foreigner?
Conspirators. Drink! drink!
Step. Ha! how they thirst for my life! Think you that death is a fearful spectre, and I a child to run away from it?—I will drink. First, a word with you, Benyowsky; I hate you; I detest you! I have sought your death, not the death of these men. You do right to force me out of the way; you do right to fetter this hand in chains! For were it free, by God! the first proof of its freedom would be to stab you to the heart.
Conspirators. Cut him down!
Ben. Hold! what do you mean! He has offended me alone and you have appointed me his judge. Unbind him—I pardon him.
Step. In vain, Count Benyowsky! you squander, in vain, your damned magnanimity. I hate you! we cannot live together! one of us must fall! Therefore let me die!
Ben. Unbind him. (*First Conspirator unbinds Stepanoff.*) You are free.
Step. Am I? then give me a sword, that I may destroy my pardoner. (*He endeavours to take a sword from one of the by-standers. Conspirators prevent Stepanoff from taking the sword.*)
Crus. Madman!
Ben. Leave him to me. Stepanoff, I know the worm that gnaws your heart. (*He draws him aside.*) Look! this is the picture of my wife.
Step. Of your wife?
Ben. I am married.
Step. Married?
Ben. I am a father.
Step. You?
Ben. And love my wife.
Step. Good God!

Ben. I am therefore unable ever to accept Athanasia's hand.

Step. (*Violently agitated, bursting into tears, embracing Benyowsky.*) Benyowsky!—Oh, I want air! (*He rushes out.*)

Conspirators. Do you give him his liberty?

Ben. Be quiet, he is our own.

Conspirators. It is strange! incomprehensible.

Ben. Perfectly natural. A silken thread will bind the most obstinate—if one knows but where to fasten it.

Wasili. (*Enters hastily.*) Lady Athanasia is coming on foot, and quite alone; she wishes to speak with you.

Ben. Athanasia! who can this mean? Retire, brethren; go through the back-door. (*Exeunt all but Benyowsky. In anxiety.*) By night! alone! on foot! so modest, so timid! and yet so bold! I fear this forebodes nothing good.

Enter ATHANASIA.

Athan. (*Rushing breathless into his arms.*) Oh! I can no more.

Ben. (*Places her gently upon a chair.*) Say, what harrasses you—whence do you come?

Athan. I come running, flying—

Ben. For what?

Athan. I hope they will not perceive my footsteps in the snow.

Ben. For God's sake!

Athan. Feel how my heart beats. (*She puts his hand upon her breast.*)

Ben. Recover yourself—

Athan. Yes, yes—I already feel myself more easy. I already feel myself better—I see you again—my anxiety is gone.

Ben. Without a cloak this cold evening!

Athan. Without a cloak? Yes, truly! Yet I am warm—very warm!

Ben. Does your father know——

Athan. Nobody knows—I alone—the minutes are precious—

Ben. Explain yourself—

Athan. Immediately! immediately!—(*Drawing her breath with difficulty.*) Oh!—patience!—Oh!—now it is gone.

Ben. You frighten me—

Athan. Not so—you are with me, and I am happy—I was but a child.

Ben. Explain this riddle.

Athan. (*Rises, stands before Benyowsky, seizes both his hands, looks steadily and affectionately in his face.*) Benyowsky!

Ben. Why this enquiring look ?

Athan. (*After a pause.*) No, it is not true—his words were false.

Ben. Whose words ?

Athan. Laugh at me, dear Count; I am a credulous fool. My chambermaid—she has a love-intrigue—Lovers, it is said, like a jest—he made her believe—but you must not be angry.

Ben. Well, proceed.

Athan. I was frightened ; and without reflection, ran-away. Blame me—laugh at me—I have deserved it.

Ben. You make me impatient.

Athan. Oh ! my dear Count, I am now quite tranquil again ; and when I look at you, I am ashamed to confess—but it must be told. Let me hide my face upon your breast, that I may speak without blushing. It is said that you are at the head of a conspiracy—would escape—recompense my father's goodness with ingratitude, and desert Athanasia ! (*Looking cheerfully.*) Now you know all—now not a word further. Do not make me still more ashamed by a defence. Not a word —you shall not utter a single *no.*

Ben. (*Agitated.*) Athanasia !

Athan. Not a word ! Not a syllable. I would beat the man who thought it necessary to defend you.

Ben. I must—

Athan. Silence, or I will stop your mouth. Away with those wrinkles of offended honour. But you may laugh—you may laugh at the foolish, childish girl. One kiss of reconciliation and I shall return home happy.

Ben. This is too much ! who could deceive this angel ! Sweet innocent !—They have not deceived you.

Athan. No !

Ben. I must fly !

Athan. (*Growing pale.*) Fly ?

Ben. Perhaps to-morrow.

Athan. Mighty God !

Ben. I am bound by a most awful oath.

Athan. Miserable Athanasia !

Ben. I have sworn victory or death to the companions of my sufferings.

Athan. Miserable, deluded Athanasia !

Ben. Perjury must be avenged with death.

Athan. (*Wringing her hands.*) Then let it fall on me.

Ben. I cannot retreat. I dare not look around—my heart bleeds—but I must on.

Athan. All is lost !

Ben. I will break this chain : my corpse alone shall they retain in bonds. I hazard much by this confession, but I can

not deceive such sweet innocence. Now I am in your power. Go, Athanasia, and discover all to your father.

Athan. (*Weeping.*) Benyowsky, I have not deserved this suspicion. Though you love me not, yet when you are far from me, and inhabiting a different part of the world, you will always think of me with sorrow. My spirit shall every where attend you, and shall often snatch from your lips the pleasing confession—Athanasia was no ignoble creature.

Ben. Separation from you is misery.

Athan. I shall die—I have lived but for a moment—We live only when we love—Spirit of my mother, receive me in thy maternal arms!

Ben. (*Very much moved.*) Be magnanimous, Athanasia! Spare me!

Athan. You are affected, dear Count!—Dear Benyowsky! stay with me! You can never be happy when you think upon my woes. My pale image will disfigure every picture of bliss. Stay amongst us! are you not already free? My impassioned love shall make these cold hills bloom with Spring. Powerful love shall inspire me with esteem for your native country. I shall form myself under your care. I shall learn every thing from you, and you shall learn from me how to love.

Ben. You put me on the rack.

Athan. See, I complain not—I weep not. Your heart must pronounce the sentence; what then have I to fear? Confidence is the coin that purchases the noble soul. I trust to you—you will not abandon me.

Ben. My associates will murder me—

Athan. Come with me! The power of my father and the arm of love shall protect you.

Ben. Shall I perfidiously sacrifice my friends?

Athan. I will embrace my father's knees—not one of your friends shall be hurt; and though their death-warrant be already signed with blood, my tears shall wash out the sentence.

Ben. (*Much affected.*) I cannot.

Athan. You can; yes, you will! What do you languish for under foreign climes?—For freedom?—Has not love burst your chains already? For wealth? Will you not be my father's heir? For love? Oh, that you will no where find but in this faithful breast!—You are my first and only love! Will you load your ship with my Father's curse? Will you in each rustling of the breeze, hear my sighs? Ah, and yet should tempests overtake you, I would kneel down on the shore and pray for your safety.

Ben. Cease, cease! I love you! by Heaven! I love you! but—

Athan. Does love admit a *but?*

Ben. I cannot deceive you.

Athan. That you will not.

Ben. You must know all—

Athan. Still more!

Ben. Look at this picture—I am married—it is my wife.

Athan. Ha! (*She sinks exhausted on a chair. Benyowsky leans against the wall, and hides his face. Athanasia, very much agitated, struggles with herself, She rises and resolutely speaks.*) Well then! I renounce you! (*Stretching out her her hand to him.*) My brother! may I call you thus! (*Benyowsky throws himself at her feet, pressing her hand to his lips.*) Fly!—if your wife loves you—Oh! she must love you!—What misery does she now suffer for your sake. Fly!

Ben. (*Springing up.*) Great God!—Emilia!

Athan. Is her name Emilia? A sweet name. O, your Emilia must be soft and good. She will permit me to possess your fraternal esteem. Will she not, Benyowsky?

Ben. Oh! that I could rush into the field of battle.

Athan. Pure and innocent is my affection for you; the sister may love the brother. No, I will not leave you! I cannot leave you! I will follow you through the wide world! I will witness the extacy of your wife on your arrival—A serene beam of comfort shall once more warm my heart. I myself will conduct you to her arms, and will find my repose in yours—I will live in tranquillity and retirement with you; assist your wife in the family economy, teach your children to lisp your name—

Ben. Athanasia! you deprive me of my understanding?

Athan. No base jealousy shall creep in amongst us; no officious neighbour shall disturb our mutual harmony. Sincerity shall give me your wife's affection; virtue and innocence, her esteem. I shall live with you, see how you act, hear what you say; I shall rejoice when you are happy, and grieve when you are distressed. Disturb not this lovely dream! Do not reject me! Give me but a little room in the cabin of your ship, where I can see you; a corner, where I can pray for you.

Ben. And your old father—

Athan. (*Hiding her face.*) All powerful God!

Enter CONSPIRATOR.

Con. The governor wishes to speak with you.

Ben. To-morrow morning.

Con. Immediately.

Ben. At such an unseasonable hour! What does this mean?

Con. The servant says that there is a terrible noise in the castle.

Ben. I will attend him. (*Exit Conspirator.*)

Athan. Go not, Benyowsky! I tremble—

Ben. For what?

Athan. Do you not hear—a terrible noise?—My father is enraged—he is not disturbed with trifles.—He sends for you at this late hour of the night—it would be madness to obey. Let me, let me go alone. If I suspect danger, and dare not write, Theodora shall bring you a red ribband. When you see that, then look to your safety.

Ben. Perhaps we are magnifying a fly into an elephant. Your father misses you, and is uneasy.

Athan. Very probably.

Ben. I will go with you.

Athan. No, no, my anxiety would betray you.

Ben. Consider, dear Athanasia—

Athan. Love does not consider, it only feels.

Ben. If we are now betrayed, there is no chance of safety, for our preparations are not yet matured. Anxiety aggravates the evil. The thunder-bolt strikes the traveller under shelter of a tree, more frequently than in the open field—let us go.

Athan. Am I able?—My knees tremble.

Ben. Support yourself upon my arm. (*They are going.*)

Enter KUDRIN.

(*Falls at Benyowsky's feet.*) Death, Count Benyowsky, give me death!

Ben. Miserable man, what is the matter with thee?

Kud. I have betrayed you—

Ben. Betrayed me!

Kud. Love has made me a traitor.

Ben. Speak quickly.

Kud. I love Theodora—wished to take her with me: a few hours ago she was standing upon the balcony—I trusted the perfidious darkness—discovered all to her—and was overheard.

Ben. Overheard! by whom?

Kud. Hettman.

Ben. By him alone?

Kud. Alone.

Ben. And did he seize you?

Kud. He held me fast—called the watch—I pushed him from me and escaped. But my conscience has tormented me the whole night; the blood of my associates cries for revenge! pardon and kill me!

Ben. Are you sure that Hettman alone overheard you?

Kud. Only he.

Ben. (*To Athanasia.*) And can you rely on Theodora?

Athan. I will answer for her.

Ben. Then rise and go in peace. Go cautiously to the harbour, and there conceal yourself in our ship. To-morrow you shall hear more.

Kud. (*Rising.*) How! no reproaches?

Ben. Words are superfluous—action can only preserve us. What is done cannot be undone. Execute my commands immediately, and do not forget yourself a second time.

Kud. An unburdened conscience gives me wings. (*Exit.*

Ben. Now, Athanasia, come to your father.

Athan. In defiance?

Ben. Of every thing. A bold countenance will invalidate Hettman's testimony. If I succeed in inspiring your father with confidence only till to-morrow, then we have won our game.

Athan. And if you do not succeed—

Ben. Then the game is lost.

Athan. And then—

Ben. I shall know how to die.

Athan. Ah, Benyowsky! (*Exeunt arm in arm.*

An apartment in the castle, the GOVERNOR *and* HETTMAN.

Gov. (*Walking up and down with troubled step.*) But did you hear aright.

Hett. Have I not ears? and when I say ears, I mean good ears.

Gov. Incomprehensible!

Hett. He called me an old fool.

Gov. For all my kindness—

Hett. He pushed me.

Gov. I gave my only child to the hypocrite.

Hett. We must twist a knout of thunder-bolts.

Gov. No, it cannot be! It were too black! Confess, Hettman, you were drunk.

Hett. Drunk! what then, is not a drunken Hettman of more value than twenty sober exiles.

Gov. God give me patience, that I may proceed in a manner suitable to my dignity, and without passion. Let law and righteousness be judges; no warm blood shall be mingled in the cup.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Count Benyowsky will attend you.

Gov. Will he come?

Serv. Immediately.

Gov. Indeed! This is audacity or innocence. Have they found Theodora?

Serv. No.

Gov. Order the Corporal to seek for the Cossack Kudrin, and bring him hither in chains. (*Servant exit.*

Hett. Oh, my young fellow, the old fool shall pay you. I am only vexed that the rascal is a Cossack.

Gov. My poor daughter!

Enter BENYOWSKY *and* ATHANASIA.

Ha! Count Benyowsky!

Hett. Welcome, my prime-minister!

Gov. What would you here, Athanasia? You come at an unseasonable hour? leave us. (*Athanasia retires with a dissatisfied air. Governor rings the bell. Enter Servant.*)

Gov. Is Theodora not yet found?

Serv. She is just come in from one of the neighbours.

Gov. Where is she?

Serv. With my lady Athanasia.

Gov. Send for her immediately. (*Looks steadily in Benyowsky's face. Servant exit.*) If he be guilty, he is no common villain. (*Aside.*)

Ben. Governor, your countenance is not as it was yesterday.

Gov. Heaven grant that our hearts may remain unchanged.

Ben. Heaven grant it!

Gov. I answer for my own.

Ben. Then I am satisfied—

Gov. I rejoice at it.

Ben. You sent for me—

Gov. Patience.

Hett. Pretty stories are in circulation here.

Ben. How so?

Hett. When I say pretty stories, I mean high treason.

Ben. Has Tschulosnikoff again——

Hett. No, no; Tschulosnikoff is in chains.

Ben. What! a new calumniator! Who is he?

Gov. He shall be confronted with you.

Ben. I hope so.

Gov. The strictest justice—

Ben. I expect it.

Gov. He shall confess aloud.

Ben. And prove—

Gov. Certainly.

Ben. And if he does not prove—

Gov. He shall suffer the severest punishment.

Ben. I am satisfied.

Gov. (*After a pause.*) But if he proves——

Ben. Then I forfeit my life to your just displeasure.

Gov. (*Looking at him steddily.*) I hope Count, you are innocent.

Ben. I know I am.

Gov. Beloved and free; what could induce you——

Ben. Consequently——

Gov. You are right. Hettman! Hettman! I fear you have occasioned me groundless anxiety.

Hett. Without necessity—has he not called me an old fool?

Ben. Who?

Gov. We are not talking of that.

Hett. The devil! What then?

Enter THEODORA.

Gov. Come nearer, Theodora. Do you know the Cossack Kudrin?

Theo. He is my lover.

Hett. There we have it.

Gov. Have you spoken to him to-day?

Theo. Yes.

Gov. Where?

Theo. From the balcony.

Gov. What did he say to you?

Theo. What he always used to say—that he loved me.

Gov. That I do not want to know.

Theo. What then?

Gov. Did he discover any thing of a conspiracy?

Theo. Conspiracy? What is that?

Hett. Did he not entreat you to fly with him?

Theo. To fly! yes.

Gov. Whither.

Theo. Ah!

Hett. Now, have I been mistaken?

Gov. Speak.

Theo. Gracious Sir, forgive my poor Kudrin.

Gov. Confess.

Theo. He complained of Hettman's severity, and proposed to me that I should fly with him to Ochozk.

Gov. Nothing else?

Hett. Nonsense! Did you not talk of a flight beyond the sea?

Theo. Yes, I said I would follow him through the wide world.

Hett. When I say the sea, I do not mean the wide world.

Theo. Aye, I did say beyond the sea, though at the same time I dread the water.

Ben. (*Smiling.*) Excellent!

Gov. Now, Hettman—how is this!

Hett. (*Shaking his head.*) All false! Did you not talk of a delightful country, that you intended to fly to?

Theo. Yes, to Ochozk. He has been in that country, and he cannot enough praise the good living there.

Gov. But the Count! the Count!

Theo. The Count?

Hett. Yes, yes, the Count! Was he not to accompany you to Ochozk?

Theo. This is the first time I have heard of it. So much the better—then I shall not leave my lady.

Hett. She pretends ignorance.

Gov. Confess! What did you say of the Count?

Theo. Not a word—But, ah! I remember.

Hett. Oh! Oh!

Theo. I told him that the Count was going to be married to Lady Athanasia.

Gov. Nothing else?

Theo. Why, what else should I tell him?

Hett. (*Impatiently.*) Of the conspiracy, the ship, the flight! Will you confess?

Theo. Pardon me, Hettman, you were a little intoxicated, and I believe you are so still.

Hett. Witch! The impudent strumpet will deny at last, that he called me an old fool!

Theo. (*Crying and irritated.*) I a witch! I an impudent strumpet!

Hett. Well, well.

Theo. I am an honest girl.

Hett. Well, well—

Theo. Educated by my gracious lady!

Hett. Well, well, well—

Gov. Be tranquil, Theodora. Have you concealed nothing from me?

Theo. But, good God! There stands the Count himself; he knows best if he intends to go to Ochozk!

Ben. The Count my dear child, thinks of nothing of the kind. But there are some serviceable people, who when they have drank too much, think for him.

Gov. Hettman, you were wrong: the wine—and the cold air——

Hett. May be so, concerning the conspiracy: but con- —upon that I will stake my life.

Gov. Well, if it is nothing else——

Hett. Is this nothing?

Gov. Well, Hettman, we must give him the cat of nine tails.

Hett. By all means.

Gov. I thank Heaven that no suspicion rests upon a man who is so dear to my heart. I readily believe what I so much admire.

Ben. Perhaps I am able to explain the riddle of the flight. There was a plan that Hettman communicated to me, concerning the Aleution Isles: I dropt a few words on the subject, and Kudrin hearing them, perhaps misunderstood me.

Hett. Ah! that is another thing. When I say another thing, I mean——

Theo. (*Sneeringly.*) Nothing.

Hett. Right, nothing.

Gov. (*Stretching out his hand to Benyowsky.*) Dear Count, we are reconciled.

Hett. (*Doing the same.*) I hope so.

Gov. Pardon the suspicion of the governor—the father was without mistrust.

Ben. It has hurt my feelings, but I forget it.

Gov. It is late. Shall we go to the supper-room?

Hett. A very reasonable thought.

Ben. I must take my leave. This day has been one of the hottest of my life. I want rest

Gov. Till to-morrow, farewel. (*Exit Benyowsky.*

Hett. What a whimsical fellow! He talks of hot days when there is such a frost that our teeth might be frozen together.

Gov. Where is my daughter?

Theo. In the supper-room.

Gov. Let us go to her. But, my friend, take care that wine does not produce new fantasies.

Hett. (*Smiling.*) The wine! Let me but see it—Ha, ha, ha! (*They are going.*)

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. A letter.

Gov. Who brought it?

Serv. A Kamtschatkan. (*Governor opens the letter and reads.*)

Hett. I hate letters.

Theo. Why so.

Hett. Fool, because one must read them.

Gov. Ha! here again!—Do you hear, Hettman. (*Reading.*) "Count Benyowsky is at the head of more than one hundred resolute men. Tschulosnikoff's ship is in their power. To-morrow he will carry off the governor's daughter. I answer for the truth of this account with my life. The state owes me my liberty.—*Stepanoff.*"

Hett. There we have it! What do you say now, my friend? Was he, too, drunk, who wrote this letter?

Gov. Ha! then I am still betrayed! Is the Count gone?

Serv. He seems to be in haste.

Gov. Haste indeed. (*To Theodora.*) Send my daughter hither.

Theo. (*Going.*) Another storm!

Hett. I will order my Cossacks to be in readiness.

Gov. How he stood! How deceitful was his mask of innocence! How tranquilly he offered his head!

Hett. *One* head we must have—either his or Stepanoff's.

ANTHANASIA *enters with* THEODORA.

Gov. (*Giving her the letter.*) Read this letter.

Athan. (*After having read it.*) Calumny, my father!

Gov. Do you know any thing of it?

Athan. Nothing.

Gov. But you turn pale!

Athan. Weariness and vexation, anger and love—

Gov. But you tremble.

Athan. Must I not tremble, when my good father, too rashly, perhaps—

Gov. Be satisfied: I shall inquire strictly into it.

Athan. I am sorry to be the cause of misfortune to any man; but Stepanoff deserves it. I know why he wishes to injure the Count. Jealousy is inventive.

Gov. Jealousy.

Athan. He loves me.

Gov. You!

Athan. To madness. This very morning he ventured to assail me in the castle; he threatened and raged—

Gov. He! Against my daughter?

Athan. I was going to call for assistance, when the Count surprised him. He rushed out with curses, and he has kept his word.

Gov. I am astonished.

Athan. Jealousy dictated this letter; judge, yourself, dear father, if it ought to disturb you.

Gov. Why did you not tell me this immediately?

Athan. I pitied him: I thought him mad.

Theo. (*Aside.*) Excellent! The storm is going over.

Hett. Hem! Again imposed upon?—This is a singular day—neither eating nor drinking; and a singular night—neither sleep nor repose.

Gov. (*Thinking again.*) Would Stepanoff venture to fabricate groundless stories? Tschulosnikoff—Kudrin—Can all this happen by mere chance?

Enter KUDRIN *in fetters, attended by the Corporal and Guard.*

Hett. Ah! the bird is caught.

Corporal. A few minutes later, and he would have made his escape.

Theo. (*To Athanasia.*) We are lost! (*Athanasia makes a sign to Kudrin.*)

Gov. Where did you apprehend him?

Cor. In the harbour.

Gov. Are any preparations made there?

Cor. Tschulosnikoff 's ship is ready to put to sea.

Gov. (*To Kudrin.*) What did you in the harbour?

Kudrin. (*Trembling.*) Mercy! mercy! and I will confess all.

Theo. (*Pressing near him.*) I have confessed every thing already, dear Kudin.

Hett. Do you know me, fellow?

Kud. You are my gracious Hettman.

Hett. Your old fool! and consequently your ungracious Hettman. When I say ungracious, I mean the knout.

Kud. Alas! alas! Spare my tender years! I was seduced.

Gov. Who seduced you?

Theo. I persuaded him.

Gov. Silence!

Theo. (*Aside.*) Fortune assist us!

Athan. (*Aside.*) We are lost!

Gov. (*To Kudrin.*) You would escape,

Kud. Alas! yes!

Gov. Whither?

Theo. Have you not relations at Ochozk?

Kud. No.

Theo. But friends and acquaintance—

Kud. I never was there in my life.

Gov. (*To Theodora.*) Silence!

Theo. Gracious master, I must speak for him; anxiety confuses him—he will talk away his life.

Hett. So much the better.

Gov. Name your associates.

Theo. Who but I—

Gov. Will you be silent?

Kud. Count Benyowsky——

Theo. Would have dissuaded you, I know, if you had but followed his advice.

Gov. Girl, I shall confine you to your chamber.

Theo. Heavenly powers! My gracious master, he is my lover, my bridegroom; for me he is become thus unfortunate. Do you hear, Kudrin? I desired you to fly with me to Ochozk, and you consented out of love to me; that is all, is it not, Kudrin? Spare his life! forgive him! he is the best Balalaika player in the country.

Gov. Away to your room!

Theo. Gracious lady! Speak a word for me—

Gov. Away with her!

Athan. Go, Theodora.

Theo. Yes, yes.—You have heard, Kudrin—I take all upon myself, and no one knows of it beside. (*Exit.*

Hett. Am I then nobody?

Gov. Now confess freely; truth only can insure your pardon.

Kud. Ah, if my brethren must die, I cannot live.

Gov. Are there many of you?

Kud. Many.

Gov. At your head stands——

Kud. Count Benyowsky.

Gov. Where have you conspired?

Kud. At the altar of God.

Gov. How will you fly?

Kud. By sea.

Gov. When?

Kud. To-morrow.

Gov. Now, Athanasia? (*Athanasia almost fainting.*) My poor child, I pity you! we have nourished a serpent.

Hett. A dragon.

Gov. My heart can pardon every weakness; but ingratitude is a crime of the blackest dye. Away with him! Your life answers for him.

Hett. Come, come! I will bespeak you a lodging. Bread without sun, and water without air—do you understand me? He shall be tamed.

Kud. (*Wringing his hands.*) Ah! My noble Count! my poor brethren! (*Exit with Hettman and guard.*

Gov. There are crimes, which excite every feeling of the soul, rouse the hatred of mankind, and change natural benevolence into cruelty. The malignant villian has played his tricks upon my heart. He shall learn to know me better.

Athan. (*At his feet.*) Mercy dear father! I love him still.

Gov. Shame on thee! Rise and spare your words; you disgrace yourself and me. Have you forgotten that you father's life and honor are at stake—or has the fellow intoxicated you with a magical draught? Are these become indifferent to you?

Athan. Oh, no! they are as dear to me as my own.

Gov. That I expected from my daughter. Let us be expeditious—danger is at hand. Sit down and write.

Athan. (*Frightened.*) What?

Gov. Benyowsky is the leader. If we have him once in our power, the rest are useless members without a head. Write!

Athan. (*Trembling.*) What shall I write?

Gov. He will conjecture his fate, and will resist my commands. You only can decoy him hither. Mask for mask. Write to him a tender and affectionate note; invite him.

Athan. Never!

Gov. How! you would——

Athan. I cannot, my dear father!

Gov. Ungrateful wretch! Shall thy mother's blessing be destroyed by thy father's curse?

Athan. I say no more.

Gov. Sit down and write!

Athan. (*Sitting at the table.*) His death warrant—

Gov. Perhaps so.

Athan. It is mine also!

Gov. It is the same to me.

Athan. I am prepared. (*Governor dictates. Athanasia writes, much agitated.*)

Gov. "Dear Count! I must speak with you this very night. Come to me immediately.—Theodora shall wait for you at the little gate. Fly into the arms of your Athanasia."

Athan. It is done.

Gov. (*Overlooks the letter.*) Scarcely legible, but it is enough. Now seal it immediately. (*Athanasia as she is sealing it, takes a small piece of red ribband from her breast, and puts it into the note. Governor calls the Servant.*)

Enter SERVANT.

Gov. Deliver this note to Count Benyowsky, and say a young lady sent you. Do you hear?

Serv. Very well. *Exit.*

Gov. To bed, girl, I will watch over you. Go, and let it be your evening prayer to God, that he may stifle this passion in your heart. Remember your mother! (*Seizing her hand with emotion.*) Think of your aged father! *Exit.*

Athan. Father! Mother! May God forgive me! I think only on him!—Sleep! and Benyowsky in danger!—Pray!—Ah! that cannot avail him!—Away, female timidity, and let courage and audacity, till now unknown to me, become inmates of my bosom! A sword, a sword in my feeble hands! Safety to my beloved! This breast shall be his shield! I will die fighting by his side!

ACT V.

SCENE—CRUSTIEW's *House: the Conspirators lying about fast asleep against the walls. Each has a Firelock near him, and a brace of Pistols in his girdle.* CRUSTIEW *sitting on a bench, with his eyes shut. His restlessness shews, that he has been in vain striving to sleep. At length he rises.*

Crustiew. I cannot sleep. Turn my head which way I will, I can obtain no rest; the blood flies through my veins, and tingles perpetually in my ears. To-morrow! to-morrow! Death or liberty! Fair freedom's genial sun-beam chases away the cold shades of the night. To-morrow is my second birth; to-morrow I begin to live again—in this world or another. Farewel, gloomy abode of my sorrows! I leave thee with reluctance. Habit gives allurements even to a prison. Each individual spider is become dear to me; each little mouse my friend. The world also is but a prison, to which habit only attaches us; with this we are grown familiar, to the other we are as yet strangers; and one is naturally averse to abandon old friends, for the company of new acquaintance.

Enter STEPANOFF.

Crus. Where have you been?

Stepanoff. Out of doors.

Crus. You run backwards and forwards in such a restless manner.

Step. Are you then tranquil?

Crus. Is every thing quiet abroad?

Step. The wolves howl.

Crus. The death-song of slavery.

Step. Possibly—Yet perhaps not.

Crus. Hope gives me confidence.

Step. We all hope; but hope is a rainbow, every one sees his own.

Crus. Is it late?

Step. Past midnight.

Crus. I am alarmed for the Count.

Step. And so am I.

Crus. Indeed!

Step. Why should I not? He is married, and Athanasia is mine!

Crus. Does she love you?

Step. I will carry her off.

Crus. Will she love you then?

Step. That is indifferent to me.

Crus. Shame on such a brutal passion!

Step. Age only *thinks* of love—youth *feels* it.

Crus. A young man of honour should not feel what an old man dares not imagine.

Step. Fine words!

Crus. Thrown away upon you.

Step. Would it were day, and all over, one way or the other.

Crus. The hours steal on.

Step. To be sure.

Crus. Like treachery in the dark.

Step. (*In confusion.*) What do you mean by that?

Crus. Nothing. Why should those words alarm you?

Step. Because—merely from my impatience.

Enter BENYOWSKY.

Crus. Ah, Benyowsky!

Step. (*Aside.*) The devil protects that man! (*Aloud.*) You are welcome, Benyowsky.

Crus. We were uneasy about you.

Ben. And with reason. Mistrust and suspicion have spread through our village. We must dispatch.

Crus. Every thing is ready.

Ben. So much the better. Kudrin's babbling had brought us to the brink of ruin; but for female artifice we had been all lost.

Step. (*Aside.*) He has discovered nothing.

Crus. Where is Kudrin?

Ben. I have sent him to the ship.

Crus. There he is secure.

Ben. How are our men disposed of?

Crus. A strong party keeps watch in the haven, another patroles through the village.

Step. The strongest of all is in the church, listening for the signal of the bell.

Crus. Our confidential men are lying here asleep.

Ben. That is well, they are recruiting their strength, and they will have occasion for it. Is the bridge broken down?

Crus. Since yesterday evening.

Ben. The powder and ball?

Crus. All distributed.

Ben. And the ambuscade at the river?

Crus. Intrusted to the care of Boskareff.

Ben. Then we may set our minds at rest. How is it with you, Stepanoff, are we friends?

Step. If you but keep your word, we shall be.

Ben. What have I promised you?

Step. The possession of Athanasia.

Ben. That she only can grant.

Enter CONSPIRATOR.

(*Comes up to Benyowsky.*) Kasarinoff wishes to speak with you.

Ben. At this late hour!—Let him come in.

Exit Conspirator.

Step. A stranger!

Crus. If he should perceive our preparations!

Ben. Be easy, I will answer for him.

Enter KASARINOFF, *hastily.*

Kas. Save yourself, Benyowsky.

Ben. Why?

Kas. You are betrayed! (*Stepanoff alarmed.*)

Ben. By whom?

Kas. By the Cossack Kudrin.

Ben. I thank you.

Kas. Is that all?

Ben. I knew it already.

Kas. And so calm!

Ben. Kudrin is secured.

Kas. Yes, secured indeed.

Ben. In our ship.

Kas. In prison.

Ben. What say you?

Kas. A few moments ago they dragged him away. Hettman himself ordered him to be put in fetters. He has confessed every thing.

Ben. (*Stamping with his feet.*) Damnation! And he suffered himself to be taken!

Kas. Hettman will be here very soon, with a strong guard, to fetch you.

Ben. Well, then, I must spring the mine the sooner.

Kas. Fare you well.

Ben. Where are you going?

Kas. I hasten home; my wife and children are alone, and will be alarmed if they hear any bustle.

Ben. Farewell my honest lad! To-morrow a freeman will bring his thanks to you. (*Exit Kasarinoff.*) Now double your foresight! At the first hint every one must be under arms.

Crus. Shall I ring the bell?

Ben. Not yet. (*He looks at his watch.*) It is two o'clock. I long for day-light.

Step. Why not now?

Ben. Lest brother strike brother in the dark.

Enter SERVANT. *Introduced by a Conspirator.*

Serv. Lady Athanasia sends you this note.

Ben. Did she, herself, give it into your hand?

Serv. She did.

Ben. (*Opens the note, the red ribband falls out.*) Ha! I understand. Thanks, dear maiden, you have kept your word. Be this ribband my badge of distinction (*He attaches it to his button-hole.*) Confine that man.

Serv. (*Frightened.*) Me! For what?

Ben. You have told a lie.

Serv. I am innocent.

Ben. Away with him.

Con. Come, my dear fellow, I will shew you your habitation. (*He drags him out.*)

Ben. Danger approaches with rapid strides. We must no longer trifle. Come, cheer up, my lads! The important hour is at hand. Ere morning dawn, we must begin. Perhaps, even now, Aurora, celebrates our victory.—Arise, ye sluggards! The voice of freedom calls.—How they sleep, as if to-morrow were a festival! Halloa, there! Will none awake? (*A drum is heard from without.*) Aha! So Hettman takes the trouble to rouse the slumberers! (*All start up, as they hear the drum, and snatch up their arms between sleeping and waking.*) Come cheer up brothers! The enemy is at the gate.

All. (*Rush towards the door.*) We are all alive, and quite ready.

Ben. Halt! To order! Silence! Away with the lights! (*The lights are extinguished.*) Two of you go to that window —open it, present your firelocks, and make ready: two others do the same at that window. You, Crustiew and Stepanoff, beset the door. Let every body in, but no one out. (*The drum beats again, Benyowsky at the window.*) What is the matter there? Who disturbs our repose?

Hettman. (*Without.*) Count Benyowsky, I arrest you in the name of the Empress.

Ben. Oh! Is it you, Hettman? step in! Welcome, though unexpected!

Hett. Surrender yourself.

Ben. Let me only first dress myself. I have jumped half naked out of bed.

Hett. Well, dress yourself.

Ben. Will you not in the mean while come in?

Hett. No.

Ben. I have a bottle of good Hungarian wine, it will warm your heart this cold night.

Hett. (*Pricking up his ears.*) How is that?

Ben. Very nectar!

Hett. Genuine Hungarian?

Ben. Aye! I acknowledge it for my countryman. Come in and taste.

Hett. Are you alone?

Ben. Quite alone.

Hett. Very well, I come. (*To his people.*) Ho, there! corporal! Look sharp! Let no one escape. Beset the door and draw your swords; I will be back immediately.

Ben. (*Turning round.*) That is false, old fool! The track points only inwards to the lion's den.

(*Hettman comes in. Stepanoff and Crustiew seize him. Hettman, preparing to defend himself.*)

Ben. (*Draws a pistol.*) Not one word, or you are a dead man.

Hett. How! you dare—

Ben. Silence, Hettman; *we* are here the strongest.

Hett. Damnation!

Ben. Give up your sword.

Hett. Do not forget who I am.

Ben. Our prisoner.

Hett. No violence.

Ben. No harm shall happen to you, if you do what I desire.

Hett. What do you desire?

Ben. Come to this open window, call cheerfully to your people, bid them come in, every man of them; tell them here is plenty to drink, and nothing to fear,

Hett. I will not.

Ben. Then you die.

Hett. That will I not either.

Ben. Then obey my commands,

Hett. Commands!

Ben. My request, if you like it better.

Hett. Request! Aye, now, that is another matter. (*He goes to the window.*)

Ben. (*Still presenting the pistol at him.*) This ball through your head, if you betray us by any ambigious word—

Hett. Only keep your hands off, and leave the matter to me. (*He calls out.*) Here, my lads, all is safe, come in and drink.

Ben. (*Whispering in his ear.*) All.

Hett. Come all in.

Ben. Without arms.

Hett. Lodge your arms, in the mean time, against the wall.

Corporal. (*Answers from without.*) Very well.

Ben. Now, out, brothers! Get them together, and lock them up in the cellar. (*All the Conspirators rush out.*)

Hett. But do you know what this joke may cost you?

Ben. Why, what?

Hett. When I say joke, I mean in earnest.

Ben. Well then, in earnest?

Hett. The knout.

Ben. Indeed!

Hett. Your nose and ears split.

Ben. Aye!

Hett. Let me go.

Ben. Patience.

Hett. It is all over with you, our measures have been well taken.

Ben. Let us hear.

Hett. The troops are all under arms.

Ben. Indeed!

Hett. They are coming on.

Ben. So much the better.

Hett. With cannon too.

Ben. They do us honour.

Hett. They will set fire to the village.

Ben. Then we must extinguish it.

Hett. Murder you all.

Ben. Oh shocking!

Hett. Then, in vain, will you cry for mercy.

Ben. For this once, however, it is your turn.

Hett. (*Aside.*) Damned scoundrel! With his genuine Hungarian! (*All the conspirators come back with lights.*)

Crus. Every thing has succeeded to our wish.

Ben. Good Hettman has been so kind as to tell me, that the enemy comes on with cannon. We must bid them welcome. Go, my lads, ring the bell. (*The bell rings.*) As

an officer may not leave his company, I must entreat you to add one more to the party in the cellar. (*To Hettman.*)

Hett. What, me in the cellar?

Ben. It is a wine cellar.

Hett. Never!

Ben. (*Shrugging up his shoulders.*) We shall be obliged then to employ force.

Hett. Sooner will I suffer myself to be cut in pieces.

Ben. Well, you have your choice.

Hett. How long must I stay there?

Ben. Only till to-morrow morning.

Hett. Be it so. You see, Count Benyowsky, I put myself to much inconvenience on your account. When I say much, I mean the cellar. (*Exit, conducted by conspirators.*)

Ben. So much for *that* fool. Has no one escaped?

Crus. Only one, who suddenly jumped back, and slipped away in the dark.

Ben. That is unlucky. Now the governor will know——

(*Athanasia rushes in, in the habit of a Cossack, a drawn sword in her hand.*)

Athanasia. Benyowsky! Save yourself!

Ben. (*Astonished.*) Athanasia!

Athan. (*Out of breath.*) The enemy—the enemy surround you!

Ben. What means this disguise?

Athan. I come to die with you.

Ben. Noble girl!

Athan. You are betrayed, shamefully betrayed!

Ben. I know it; Kudrin——

Athan. No, not Kudrin—(*Pointing to Stepanoff.*) There stands the traitor.

Ben. Who—Stepanoff?

Athan. (*To Stepanoff, holding forth his letter.*) Do you know this letter? (*Stepanoff is struck dumb with confusion.*)

Ben. (*Snatches the letter from her hand and reads it.*) Ha! Rascal! Do you know this letter?

Step. Thinkest thou I fear thee; and will deny my hand writing?—I did write it.

Ben. And you thus sport with your oath! with the lives of your friends!

Step. With thy life.

Ben. (*Turning round to the others.*) Treachery!

All. Cut him down!

Step. As you like. Without this girl, life is a burden to me. Give her to me, and my last drop of blood shall flow for you.

alone, reckons on the ocean's constancy—what means that firing?

Sol. Yonder, in the hollow way; a most hideous slaughter.

Gov. Are ours victorious?

Sol. They fly.

Gov. Which way?

Sol. Towards the forest.

Gov. And their artillery?

Sol. They have left behind.

Gov. Ha! Dastard hirelings!—Go, messenger of ill! let the alarm be given; every man to his station. (*Soldier exit.* It becomes serious. Where must I leave the women?

Enter THEODORA.

Theo. Oh, my God!

Gov. My daughter asleep?

Theo. She is gone.

Gov. Gone!

Theo. Run away in man's cloaths.

Gov. Die, then, greyheaded fool!

Theo. (*Wringing her hands.*) Wretched girl that I am.

Gov. That went to my heart.

Theo. Why have I been silent?

Gov. Now, conscious rectitude assist me? (*The alarm drum is heard.*)

Enter SOLDIER *hastily.*

Soldier. We are ruined.

Gov. What new misfortune?

Sol. The rebels are victorious.

Gov. Where?

Sol. They are already upon the bridge.

Gov. Who let down the bridge?

Sol. We took them for our friends.

Gov. Bar the gate.

Sol. They have cut that down.

Gov. Without opposition?

Sol. They hew down every thing.

Gov. Well, then! The ringleader shall not escape my vengeance! (*He rushes into the closet.*)

Theo. (*Falls upon her knees.*) God assist us!

Gov. (*Comes, back, armed with pistols.*) Now, then, to meet them.

Theo. (*Casts herself down, and embraces his knees.*) For God's sake! Gracious master!

Gov. What wouldst thou?

Theo. Your life is in danger.

Gov. Honour lost, all is lost ; (*He spurns her away, and is rushing out. Benyowsky, Crustiew, Baturin, and other Conspirators press in. Theodora runs into the closet.*)

Ben. Surrender yourself!

Gov. (*Draws back a step, and fires a pistol at Benyowsky.*) To hell with thee !

Ben. (*Taking hold of his left arm.*) I am wounded.

Gov. (Not yet dead ! (*He attempts to discharge the second pistol. They disarm him.*)

Ben. Be calm, governor.

Gov. (*Fiercely.*) Calm !

Ben. I am come to protect you.

Gov. You ! me !

Ben. I shall never forget what I owe you.

Gov. Never ! Ha ! ha ! ha !

Ben. Crustiew, I entrust him to your care.

Crus. He is the hostage for our liberty.

Ben. His life be sacred to you.

Crus. To me and all.

Ben. Keep watch over him in his room.

Crus. (*To the Governor.*) I entreat you, Sir, to follow me.

Gov. God of Heaven, do thy thunders sleep !
(*Exit, with Crustiew and guard.*)

Ben. The greatest difficulty is overcome.

Bat. Thanks to Heaven !

Ben. And to your valour.

Bat. You are wounded !

Ben. I feel it not. Go, Baturin, see that every thing we want, be brought to the ship—powder, victuals, stores, money——

Bat. Every thing is already on board. A most splendid booty.

Ben. That I bestow among you—where is Athanasia ?

Bat. Upon the staircase I saw her last.

Ben. She does not mean, I hope—(*He is rushing out.*)

Enter ATHANASIA *meeting* BENYOWSKY.

Athan. Where is my father ?

Ben. Safe.

Athan. Dead !

Ben. Alive !

Athan. Where ?

Ben. In his room.

Athan. You deceive me.

Ben. No, indeed.

Athan. I hear firing.

Ben. He resisted.

Athan. Good God! You are wounded——

Ben. A mere flesh wound; be not alarmed.

Athan. I will away to my father!

Ben. Spare his first grief.

Athan. Who is with him?

Ben. Crustiew.

Athan. Ah! what have I done?

Enter CONSPIRATOR *hastily.*

Conspirator. The people surround the citadel.

Ben. In arms?

Con. The troops assemble together, and are bent upon storming it.

Ben. Away, then to the ramparts.

Con. We are few in number; all dispersed.

Ben. (*Musing for a moment.*) Drive the women, children, and old men into the church, and threaten to set fire to it, if they refuse us free passage.

Con. Immediately.

Ben. Bring the governor in chains upon the rampart—shew him to the people—his head answers for our safety.

(Exit Conspirator.

Athan. Mercy! mercy!

Ben. Be not alarmed—only a vague threat—the people love your father.

Athan. Who does not love him!

Ben. They will tremble for his life, and let us go in peace.

Athan. Ah, Benyowsky, you have it still in your power to re-establish all things. Once more give me up, and restore me and yourself to my father. Set him at liberty! Open the gates! You have fought as a hero, now act as a man! your enemies are subdued, subdue now yourself! Exchange the laurel of victory for the myrtle of love! the dangers of the sea, for tranquillity in my arms! Come to my father, and loose his fetters; receive, in return, together with his blessing, pardon for your followers, repose to your conscience, and you will confer on me happiness inexpressible!

Ben. Athanasia, whither roves your fancy! My wife—

Athan. Ah! I know not what I say!

Ben. The die is cast! The great wheel of destiny irresistibly rolls on. What mortal might shall grasp the spoke?

Athan. Heavens protect me! or this confusion will overwhelm me.

Ben. Sister I will perform what I promised you.

Con. (*Comes back.*) It has taken effect.

Ben. Is every thing quiet?

Con. They tremble at our threat, and entreat for peace.

Ben. The governor——

Con. Exhorted them from the rampart not to spare his person.

Ben. Ha!

Con. Storm! called he: I command it in the name of the Empress.

Ben. Noble and great!

Con. But in vain.

Ben. It is well! Nothing now detains us; Let the drum beat, that the dispersed may collect themselves. Take the governor in the midst of you! in the harbour we will set him free. Load well your guns. Place cannon at the head of our forces; march by them with lighted matches. There shall be no more hostility, no tumult, no shouts of triumph; nothing to re-animate the rage of the people. Go, I follow you.

(*Exit Conspirator.*

Ben. Come, dear Athanasia.

Athan. (*hesitating.*) Oh, my paternal roof!

Ben. Look not on the past.

Athan. Here was I born! Here have I been fostered by a mother's love, and a father's tender care.

Ben. Do not embitter your departure.

Athan. For the last time!

Ben. Still you may choose.

Athan. No, never shall I see again this abode of my youthful joys; Never shall I hear again the mild voice of my father.

Ben. You torture yourself and me.

Athan. Forgive me! (*A drum is heard.*)

Ben. The minutes are precious.

Athan. (*Suppressing her anxiety.*) I am ready.

Ben. Beloved girl! Separation from you would be terrible! though still, even now, the choice is in your power—Remain or go.

Athan. Remain!—Ah, my father!—Beat the drum!—Beat the drum! that the noise may drown my voice!—Away, away! Bear me away!

Ben. Come to my brotherly arms.

Athan. (*Once more looking sorrowful around her.*) Blessings on my old father. (*Exeunt.*

The Scene changes. The back ground represents a part of the Harbour. The Frigate ready for sailing; the Crew busily employed; the Conspirators run backwards and forwards. Confused noise heard on all hands. "Heave the Anchors!—

Unfurl the sails!—The Wind is North—East by East: Pilot!—Hallo there!—They are coming!—yonder is the party winding down the hill—good luck to us! All is ready!—Huzza! huzza!"

[BENYOWSKY, ATHANASIA, CRUSTIEW, *and the other* CONSPIRATORS *come forward.* GOVERNOR *in Chains, under a strong Guard, exhausted with rage. Meantime* CRUSTIEW *and the Conspirators run to the Ship, make arrangements, Give orders, &c.* BENYOWSKY *approaches the* GOVERNOR. ATHANASIA *remains fearfully standing at a distance.*

Ben. I have but a few moments. Do we part as friends? (*Governor throws a look of contempt upon him, turns away from him and gnashes his teeth.*) That I was taken prisoner fighting against Russians, was that a crime?—That I have this day broken these hard fetters, Is that a crime? (*Governor keeps a sullen silence.*) Honour and patriotism summoned me; to the fate of these my brothers, an oath bound mine. (*Governor does not answer.*) I had left at home a pregnant wife—Old man! what wouldst thou have done in my place? (*Governor stubbornly silent.*) Am I not worthy of one word, of one look? It is well! What grief and rage do now condemn, your cooler blood to-morrow will excuse—Farewel! (*Governor grasps his chains in fury, and attemps to rush upon him. He is restrained. He sees Athanasia, beats his forehead with redoubled fury, and laments aloud.*)

Athan. (*Throws herself at his feet.*) Pardon, my father!

Gov. (*Turning from her.*) Who speaks to me?

Athan. Your blessing!

Gov. My curse pursue thee across the ocean! Mayst thou hear it in the storm! hear it in the arms of thy paramour! tremble at it when the lightenings hiss around thee; and when the sun shines, think with horror that it shines upon the grave of thy murdered father! When the thunder roars, may it sound my curse into thine ear, and if a soft breeze murmur, mayst thou fancy it thy father's dying groan. May all abandon thee at thy last hour, as thou abandonest me! Let nought but the image of thy wrathful father float before thy fevered brain! Shouldst thou bear children, a grandsire's curse be their inheritance; May their ingratitude revenge me on their mother! (*Athanasia sinks speechless and half dead into Benyowsky's arms. The Governor deeply affected.*) Stay with me, my child! My dear, deluded child, remain with me! I am old and infirm. When thy mother died, she said to me, Weep not, I leave you, Athanasia. Wilt thou make a liar of thy dying mother! A few weeks, perhaps only a few days, how soon they are gone? Then will

I lay myself down and die, and thou mayst say—I have fulfilled the commands of my mother—I have closed my father's eyes.

Ben. (*Agitated.*) Spare her!

Gov. Thou art my only joy—my only consolation! I love thee with a father's fondness! so will no vile seducer love thee; satiated in thine arms, he will repay thee with disgust; whilst thy old father, in return for his blessing, asks but the gentle pressure of thy hand upon his eyelids, when they close themselves in death. Oh! that these locks were not already grey; in this sad moment would they whiten, and the sight, perchance might move thee. (*Athanasia attempts to raise herself, and falls fainting back.*)

Ben. (*Very much moved.*) God of heaven! help!—Seize her and bear her away.

Gov. (*Beside himself with anxiety and grief.*) Count Benyowsky, if thou believest in God, hear me! I have never offended thee! I have shewn the all the kindness in my power! Thou hast robbed me of my all. Thou hast robbed me of my rank and honour! Leave me my daughter, and I still am rich! Count Benyowsky, if thou believest in God, hear me!—For thine own wife's sake, who prays for thee at home! How can God grant her prayer, if thou robbest me, a poor old man, of this my only jewel! For thy child's sake, which thou knewest not when thou wentest from home, if thou wouldst not that it make thee a wretched Father! What wouldst thou do with her? see, already she is a corpse—restore to me the corpse of my daughter! (*He falls upon his knees, and stretches out his hands towards heaven.*) Count Benyowsky, I have no words—I have no tears;—but God has thunder!

Ben. (*Very much agitated, lays the fainting Athanasia in the arms of the kneeling old man.*) There, you have her, old man! (*He draws out the picture of his wife.*) Emilia! my wife! —Away on board! (*Confused tumult. All hasten on board.*)

Gov. (*Pressing his daughter to his bosom in extacy, while he stretches out his other hand towards the ship.*) God bless thee, stranger! God Almighty bless thee!——(*The curtain falls.*)

FINIS.

THE WRITING-DESK;

OR

YOUTH IN DANGER.

A PLAY,

IN FOUR ACTS,

FROM THE GERMAN OF KOTZEBUE.

NEW-YORK:

PRINTED FOR CHARLES SMITH, *No.* 56 *Maiden-Lane.*

1801.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

DITTHELM . . . . . *a young merchant.*
HERRMANN . . . . . *his first clerk.*
ELINK . . . . . *his servant.*
MR. ERLEN . . . . . *a Counsellor.*
MRS. ERLEN . . . . . *his Wife.*
SOPHIA . . . . . } *their children.*
ENSIGN ERLEN . . . . }
COUNTESS OF MEERVITZ.
BARON BOLDENSTERN.
HADEBRATH.
MADAME LUPPNITZ.
EEMILY, *her daughter.*
CAPTAIN FERNAU . . . *an officer of the Police.*
A BOY.

The SCENE is in a great town.

Ditt. Well, then, have it ſet to muſic!

Herr. Our forefathers trafficked, and their poſterity reap the benefit.

Ditt. Theſe moping humours become you mightily well—I like them.

Herr. Have I then inſinuated myſelf?

Ditt. Better and better—you muſt chat with me for an hour. *(To Flink.)* Flink! chocolate. Our good old Herrman will breakfaſt with me.

Herr. By no means—I am come to you on buſineſs.

Ditt. (Gaping.) So!

Herr. Firſt of all, a meſſage to your heart.

Ditt. What! is my gloomy Herrmann a meſſenger of love?

Herr. Why a meſſenger of love? Your heart was formerly open to compaſſion.

Ditt. Formerly only?—*(moved)*—that were hard.

Herr. Heaven be praiſed, that in this inſtance you do not treat me with a cold jeſt.

Ditt. Speak, dear Herrman—your compaſſion is bail for the recompence.

Herr. I have been informed, that old Erlen is in great diſtreſs.

Ditt. How!—Can I relieve him?

Herr. Poor old man!—You recollect him?

Ditt. Recollect him!—My fathers moſt intimate friend.

Herr. You recollect alſo in what manner this unfortunate man loſt his all?

Ditt. I have heard ſay in our trade.

Herr. The ſudden death of your father has thrown a veil over the event, which God alone can ſee through. For my part, I am convinced of Erlen's diſpoſition—he never told a lye.

Ditt. Well, then, what can I do for him?

Herr. I think it an act of duty to ſupport him; in what manner, I leave to your own diſcretion. The man is honeſt and noble minded. To offer him your beneficence direct, I am ſure he will not accept.

Ditt. But through the hands of a third perſon———

Herr. As you pleaſe. I have done my part, by making you acquainted with his deplorable ſituation.

Ditt. I thank you for your anxiety to give me comfort.

Herr. (With warmth.) In truth! Is not doing good ſtill a comfort to you?

Ditt. (Gently rebuking Herrmann.) Herrmann!

Herr. Pardon me. As I taught you to read and write, the tutor remains as yet freſh in my memory.

Ditt. (*Takes Herrmann by the hand.*) Good Herrmann!

Herr. Now, one word on buſineſs as a merchant—Our correſpondence in Saxony———

Ditt. Is very tedious.

Herr. But conſider the fine brown vitriol—it is an object worth your attention.

Ditt. Don't be angry, old friend—I prefer the Engliſh vitriol; it is as clear, and as hard as cryſtal; is much ſooner diſſolved in water, and melts eaſier in fire. Now, my good old friend, I think that, for once, you will own I have ſaid a great deal on buſineſs, and with rationality too—is it not ſo?

Herr. Thank Heaven! if now and then only the careful minded, and well-inſtructed merchant, appear through the inexperience of your youth—it is as if I beheld your late father before me. We will then have our vitriol from England—from Hull.

Ditt. From Hull! very well. Have we not done now?

Herr. Yes. (*Going.*)

Ditt. But my dear Herrmann, I want money.

Herr. Money again! Much?

Ditt. About two hundred pounds. I had the ill luck to looſe laſt night.

Herr. The coffer is your own—here is a ſum juſt come in—(*gives him a pocket-book.*)

Ditt. But do not give it me in anger—put on a ſmiling countenance.

Herr. Young man, I love you; and from the gratitude I bear your late father, I think it my duty to act with ſincerity toward you, his ſon. I muſt therefore inform you, if you continue to go on in this manner, inevitable ruin will be the conſequence.

Ditt. No, no!

Herr. Yes, Yes!—I am almoſt aſhamed to own that I taught you to cypher; for it ſeems as if multiplication were totally forgotten, and that you had only remembered ſubſtraction.

Ditt. Patience, good old man; it is but two months ſince I became of age.

Herr. For that very reaſon, in two years time it would be to late to remind you———

Ditt. Youth is the ſeaſon for enjoyment.

Herr. And is not a pure and moderate enjoyment of the amuſements and pleaſures of this life ſufficient? Oh! Let me entreat you once more, my dear Frederick—pardon me for calling you ſon.

Ditt. (*Gives him his hand.*) Willingly—with all my heart.

Herr. As you are a young beginner, and but little acquainted with the art of gain, endeavour to preſerve and keep that which

Providence has bleſſed you with, through the induſtry of your reſpected father, and conſider the comfortable ſituation you are placed in; while many a youth, unprovided for, is compelled to ſtruggle through difficulties innumerable to earn a livelihood—remember this incident.

Ditt. Good luck and handſome women beſtow their favors moſt rarely on merit.

Herr. You have a good head, and a tender heart—what megrim can have whirled you into this ſtrange element?

Ditt. The megrim of youth.

Herr. Avoid thoſe ſharpers who go about from place to place, making it their buſineſs to lead youth aſtray. Caſt off ſuch vagabonds from about your perſon—*(pointing at Flink.)*

Flink. Your humble ſervant.

Ditt. Conſider my leiſure hours, good Herrmann—one jovial day is worth more to me than a whole tedious year.

Herr. Employ your heart.

Ditt. I do.

Herr. Look out for a virtuous girl.

Ditt. I do that every day.

Herr. And when you have found———

Ditt. Oh! I have found them by dozens.

Herr. Then marry one.

Ditt. Hem!—yes, to marry may ſurely be a good paſtime; but matrimony with ſome muſt be damned tedious.

Herr. Oh! had you but known your good parents———

Ditt. One ſwallow does not make ſummer.

Herr. Neither do a pair of withered trees make winter.

Ditt. I have not the genius of Socrates to guide my choice.

Herr. The heart———

Ditt. That beats for every fine girl—there is the gentle Emely—the roguiſh Caroline—the pouting Henrietta—the modeſt Sophia—Sophia!—ſtop, ſtop!—No, ſhe does not belong to my regiſter.

Herr. Who is this Sophia?

Ditt. An attractive, lovely girl—virtuous without pride—modeſt without baſhfulneſs—witty without ridicule—and prudent without affectation.

Herr. That picture reſembles your late mother. Would to God, that it may alſo in future reſemble your wife!

Ditt. But, to my ſorrow, this amiable creature is only a chamber-maid.

Herr. I would much rather have you married to ſuch a chamber-maid, than to ſee you ramble and rove about any longer.

Ditt. (Laughing.) Then you recommend a good wife as a certain, never-failing remedy againſt all diſeaſes of the ſoul?

Herr. Yes, I do. A good wife is a ſhield againſt ſeduction; and the comfort of domeſtic bliſs is a healing balſam for all worldly wounds.

Ditt. Hearing you ſpeak thus, who would believe you to be an old bachelor?

Herr. It grieves me to own I am one. Poverty has always driven love far from me. Pity, but do not mock a poor old man, whoſe lot from infancy has been to work hard for his daily maintenance; and, therefore, to give up life's choiceſt bleſſing—how often, when in evening's cheaful hours I witneſſed the mutual happineſs of your parents, has my heart o'erflowed, and my eyes have been moiſt with tears? How often, when ſleepleſs on my ſolitary couch, have I reckoned over an exerciſe in algebra, to prevent the recollection of thoſe unhappy wiſhes which belong not to the account of my life?—Pity me.

Ditt. Good Herrmann, if pecuniary concerns have alone been the cauſe of preventing you from going to the altar of Hymen, then marry—I will double your pay, and give up half my houſe to you.

Herr. Should I alſo aſſiſt in plundering you?

Ditt. I ſhall then begin to ſave, when I know for whom I do it—for the friend of my father—the inſtructor of my youth. O yes, dear Herrmann, give me this pleaſure—Marry.

Herr. Too late.

Ditt. Good fortune late in life—is like fine weather in autumn—one enjoys it doubly.

Herr. (*in jeſt*) Should I probably increaſe the number of your amorous intrigues, by taking a wife?

Ditt. Fy, Herrmann—that is not kind—I mean it well.

Herr. And I am only jesting. Your goodneſs has given me comfort. God favour your deſigns, and bleſs you with a good and virtuous wife—when I can no longer write, I will rock the cradle of your children. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV.

Enter FLINK.

Ditt. (*looking earneſtly after Herrmann*) The moſt honest man I know.

Flink, (aſide) 'Tis time for me to grumble, that I may be called honeſt too.

Ditt. Had I not him—

Flink. You would have no Hypocondriack in the houſe.

Ditt. He is right: my manner of living is like a Chineſe picture,

compoſed of many colours, but without light and ſhade. Devouring is not enjoying; nor is turning over leaves, reading.

Flink. That ſounds as if to-day were your fiftieth birth-day.

Ditt. (reflecting) A lovely girl—a wife. Ah! where ſhall I find her?

Flink. Here in my hand (*holds out a letter to him.*)

Ditt. What have you got there?

Flink. A letter from Miſs Emily.

Ditt. Welcome! this will diſſipate my thoughts. *(reads.)*

Flink. Diſſipate them! methinks the girl is too good for diſſipating only your thoughts.

Ditt. Do you alſo begin to preach?

Flink. A gentle dove——

Ditt. Say rather a goſling.

Flink. Chaſte as a nun——

Ditt. (laughing). Flink admiring chaſtity.

Flink. A heart full of love—

Ditt. To herſelf.

Flink. Well read.

Ditt. In the journal of faſhion.

Flink. Handſome as the graces—

Ditt. But not as Sophia.

Flink. She is not a chamber-maid, to be ſure.

Ditt. Enough of your praiſe; I don't like thoſe girls whoſe mouths one is obliged to ſtop with kiſſes, to prevent their talking nonſenſe.

Flink. Then you do not like the attractive Emily?

Ditt. Oh yes, I do love her—why ſhould I not? you ſee we correſpond.

Flink. But correſpondence and a marriage contract are two very different things.

Ditt. One has all ſorts of vexation in this world to encounter with—loſſes at play—quarrels with friends; in ſhort, the best one can do to forget them, is to gather ſweets from the lips of a pretty girl.

Flink. (aſide) Oh, dear me, my good Madame Luppnitz.

Ditt. But to marry—what a pity that Sophia is only a chamber-maid.

Flink. (aſide) The florin, however, I have earned fairly.

Ditt. Yet what am I? a mere child of luck; what can I balance againſt Sophia's charms? a handful of gold.

SCENE V.

Enter HADEBRATH *(an old Man with a grey beard, and hair dreſſed neat and plain.)*

Hade. Good day, my ſon!

Ditt. Be welcome, honeſt Hadebrath! at laſt you have once more found your way to your pupil.

Hade. God forbid that I ſhould not have found my way—*(with a ſerious look at Flink)* leave us alone.

Flink. *(ſnappiſh)* Whenever my maſter commands me, not otherwiſe.

Hade. *(cold and ſevere)* Fellow! thou haſt yeſterday taken a bribe to circumvent thy maſter. Be gone!

Flink. *(aſide)* Damned conjurer. [*Exit.*

Hade. *(aſtoniſhed)* What! does that mean reverend father? patience, his time is not yet come.

Ditt. You ſeem to be acquainted with the lateſt occurrences of my houſe, although for ſeveral weeks paſt you have diſappeared.

Hade. I was always near thee.

Ditt. But not inviſible?

Hade. I have followed thee from the faro-table to the tavern, and from the dwellings of pleaſure to the huts of the poor.

Ditt. Incomprehenſible.

Hade. Thou gameſt—thou looſeſt great ſums—I have forgiven thee; for when I looked into thy heart, I found it free from greedineſs of gain.

Ditt. A mortal to look into my heart.

Hade. Thou drinkeſt—thou get'ſt intoxicated merely to oblige hypocrites.

Ditt. That is true alſo.

Hade. Thou trifleſt with young maidens—take care—I forgive thee, becauſe thine heart is not inclined to ſenſual pleaſures.

Ditt. Extraordinary! by heaven.

Hade. Thou didſt deſcend to the habitations of miſery to dry up tears in ſecret—for that be bleſſed. *(in a ſolemn manner lays his hand upon him.)*

Ditt. What means this! am I ſurrounded by ghoſts and ſpectres?

Hade. Thou didſt ſave a pitiable tradeſman from ſtarving and deſtruction but two days ago—for that be bleſſed.

Ditt. Man; when I did that I was quite alone.

Hade. I was always near thee.

Ditt. No one knew me.

Hade. I knew thee.

Ditt. Oh! thou art incomprehenſible—if I am found worthy to be inſtructed in what ſeems ſupernatural, why doſt thou not ſatisfy my thirſt after higher knowledge?

Hade. I have ſpied thee out—have held my ſtaff before thee, as the philoſopher did to Alcibiades; but young man, art thou already able to look into the ſun, and ſee the ſpots? knoweſt thou already the bottomleſs pit into which the ſtars vaniſh? the luminaries from which new ſtars ariſe?

Ditt. I do not underſtand you.

Hade. Endure—learn—be ſilent—and above all things, forget!

Ditt. What ſhall I forget?

Hade. Enough for to day. (*after a pauſe*) I did promiſe to give thee information of thy friend Blunt.

Ditt. (*haſtily*) Of Blunt? my dear American friend?

Hade. He greets thee.

Ditt. I ſuppoſe him dead.

Hade. He is dead.

Ditt. (*in great agitation, yet doubtful*) then it muſt be his ghoſt.

Hade. (*with reſerve*) his ghoſt!

Ditt. (*animated*) thou couldſt forever make me obedient unto thee, and fetter me to thyſelf, if thou wouldſt let me ſee the ghoſt of Blunt.

Hade. I could—but dare I?

Ditt. It is not from curioſity—but friendſhip.

Hade. That would be ſomething (*takes hold of both his hands, and looks ſtedfaſtly at him for ſome time*) it is true.

Ditt. Oh! then let me, thou ſearcher of my heart! let me behold the friend of my youth again (*takes a miniature from againſt the wall*) My gentle William (*looking at the picture with tenderneſs*)

Hade. Give me the picture (*taking it from Ditthelm's hand* (fold thy hands—look up to heaven, and be ſilent. (*Ditthelm does what he is deſired. Hadebrath holds the picture up with both hands—his body trembling---his eyes rolling --all on a ſudden it ſeems as if his whole frame had received an electric ſhock—his countenance begins to brighten; and with an elevated ſmile, turns round to the reſtleſs Ditthelm--lays his hand ſoftly on his ſhoulder, and ſays*) thou ſhalt ſee him.

Ditt. When? when?

Hade. When? (*after a pauſe*) in a few weeks.

Ditt. Why not ſooner? why not to-day?

Hade. (*much diſquieted*) To day I go to priſon.

Ditt. (*ſurpriſed*) To priſon.

Hade. I have given bail for an honeſt man; he cannot pay, nor I either—he is fled. I fly not.

Ditt. Are there likewiſe dungeons for a man who is endowed with ſuch ſingular knowledge?

Hade. Oh, yes; becauſe this man reſpects the law; for the reſt I am at liberty there, and ſhall be always fluttering about thee.

Ditt. But how long?

Hade. In three times nine days, a ſhip from Smyrna will caſt anchor in our haven: welcome will be the treaſures which my brethren ſend to me from Egypt—welcome for the ſake of the poor.

Ditt. Three times nine days! an age! why don't you aſk of your wealthy pupil?

Hade. I never aſk.

Ditt. But I aſk the honour of your confidence—how much does the ſum amount to?

Hade. One hundred dollars.

Ditt. (*divides the contents of his pocket-book*) Here they are.

Hade. (*takes hold of both his hands, and looks ſtedfaſtly at him for a few moments.*) Yes; thou giveſt it with pleaſure.

Ditt. Surely.

Hade. (*takes the money and ſpeaks with a true and feeling heart*) Oh! didſt thou know the miſery that this ſum will mitigate! have thanks—have thanks—noble youth.

Ditt. When ſhall I now ſee my friend?

Hade. (*after conſidering a moment, he again ſpeaks in a ſolemn tone of voice*) This very day.

Ditt. In the night.

Hade. Impoſtors avail themſelves of night. When the thirty-third minute of the third hour approaches, thy friend Blunt ſhall appear unto thee.

Ditt. Where?

Hade. I will conduct thee. (*going*)

Ditt. But his picture?

Hade. From the hand of a friend thou ſhalt receive it again. [*Exit.*

SCENE VI.

Ditt. (*alone*) What a man! and only the agent of an Higher Power can excite fear and love—trembling and confidence in every breaſt; did he not know each of my ſecret actions? each of my very thoughts? Nay, even—Oh! if he but keeps his promiſe—why do I doubt? (*looks about frightened*) I muſt not offend him—he may hear me—ſurely he will be punctual to his word—and then, good Herrmann, ſhall I ſtill be ſurrounded by deceivers?

SCENE VII.

Enter FLINK.

Ditt. Better come nearer, ſtill my friend—you ſtep with much boldneſs before me.

Flink. I hope, that the conjurer—

Ditt. Reſpect, Maſter Flink.

Flink. With his adminiſtering ſpirits has not bely'd you.

Ditt. Have a care, him thou canſt not deceive.

Flink. To be ſure—to him, I am a mere apprentice.

Ditt. Silent!

Flink. A poor ſervant—honeſt and merry—a little ſtupid perhaps.

Ditt. Enough; what have you got there?

Flink. My monthly accompts, honorable Sir!

Ditt. How often muſt I repeat it to you, Flink, that I am not honorable?

Flink. But—

Ditt. Italian beggars call every body, "My Lord," and German cheats ſalute all travellers by the title of "Excellence;" you are either going to beg or cheat.

Flink. Ah! No, Mr. Ditthelm, my parents were but ſimple people—I was not brought up to ſo advantageous a profeſſion.

Ditt. (*Laughing*) A genius knows no limits; give it here, (*takes the bill and reads*) "For ſhoe-blacking four dollars." Fellow! four dollars worth of ſhoe-blacking would ſerve a whole regiment of ſoldiers.

Flink. Aſk pardon, it is patent blacking.

Ditt. "For ſhaving ſoap and bruſhes five dollars;" By Zoroaſter's beard! thou art a filcher.

Flink. Do you only employ me as a ſervant?

Ditt. "For faſtening the hand of a watch five dollars." (*ſtaring Flink in the face, who looks at him without fear*) Do you know what Herrmann would ſay to all this? (*Flink ſhrugs up his ſhoulders, and ſhakes his head*) "If this continues (*he would ſay*) then will the hand of the watch ſoon point at the hour of bankruptcy?"

Flink. People of faſhion have their watches repaired by Monſieur Recot, and Monſieur Recot is expenſive. A German to be ſure would have charged only half the ſum; but Monſieur Recot is no German.

Ditt. "For curing the favourite ſpaniel ten dollars." Fellow! I gave but five for him.

Flink. I believe it, for he is an honeſt dog.

Ditt. That is more than thou canſt ſay of thyſelf.

Flink. Aſk pardon, Mr. Ditthelm—formerly, give me leave to

obſerve, dogs were taken to ſhepherds to be cured; but in our days we have doctors for that purpoſe, and they cannot be paid with ſilver.

Ditt. Obſerve me, Flink! I don't mind being cheated, but with a little more delicacy, if you pleaſe.

Flink. I am but a young beginner—you muſt have patience.

Ditt. There, take your traſh.

Flink. Shall I diſcharge it?

Ditt. (laughing) If thou art not afraid that one day or other thy conſcience will bring thee to the gallows.

Flink. Oh! the gallows is only an encouragement to become a greater rogue.

Ditt. (ſmiling) Add to your bill, "for witty ſimplicity, five dollars."

Flink. A fine premium—my maſter is ſpoiled for a bookſeller.

SCENE VIII.

Enter Baron BOLDENSTERN.

Baron Bold. Good morning *cher Ami! (to Flink)* A diſh of chocolate, my friend.

Ditt. Welcome Baron! I thought you were ſtill in the arms of ſleep.

Baron Bold. The morning was ſo fine—ſo inviting—

Ditt. For a walk?

Baron Bold. No, for a party at billiards; I am no friend to walking—pacing up and down without an aim.

Ditt. Without an aim? one can admire and contemplate the beauties of nature.

Baron Bold. For that purpoſe one has landſcapes hung up againſt the walls, and flower-pots placed before the windows—*(Flink brings the chocolate)*—*(the Baron ſips it)* then point out to me, *cher ami*, the beauties of nature; as one always ſpeaks of its attractions, but never of its deformities: here blow roſes and violets very well; but yonder I am ſtung by nettles, and all the folds of my coat hang full of burs; here ſings a nightingale very prettily—but at the ſame time, I am tormented with the naſty chafers that flutter about my ears. *Enfin*, in the morning I am wetted with dew—at mid-day I am ſcorched by heat.—in the afternoon I am ſmothered with duſt—and in the evening I am bitten with gnats—*(to Flink)*—fetch me a glaſs of liqueur.

Ditt. You will get into a law ſuit with the poets.

Baron Bold. Je ne diſpute pas de goûts. I have tried every thing—*eſſleuré*, a German has no name for it. I muſt own, that I have no where found ſo much amuſement as at the billard table.

Ditt. You are right—it enſures and preſerves activity.

Baron Bold. It ſharpens the underſtanding—

Ditt. And excites the paſſions.

Baron Bold. Where is enjoyment without paſſion?

Ditt. The philoſophers on the contrary—

Baron Bold. Have found out a language which no one underſtands.

Ditt. The moraliſts—

Baron Bold. Are tedious, *(he ſwallows the liqueur)*—*(to Flink)* Fetch me a ſandwich.—*Enfin mon ami,* it remains a fact, that gaming only can fetter a man of taſte.

Ditt. Gaming and love.

Baron Bold. You will be at the Counteſs's to-day?

Ditt. To play, or to love?

Baron Bold. Both, if you pleaſe; but the Counteſs is already *ſur le retour.*

Ditt. She has a lovely chamber-maid.

Baron Bold. Yes; has the little rogue bewitched you too? A pity ſhe is ſo uninformed.

Ditt. Uninformed! I beg your pardon; ſhe ſeems to me, as well informed as her rank in life requires.

Baron Bold. Tant pis! She has, Heaven knows where, imbibed principle; for, would you believe it, the other evening wiſhing her a *bon repos,* at the ſame time offering to kiſs her, ſhe had the impertinence to ſalute me with a box on the ear.

Ditt. What Cato could have withſtood the temptation?

Baron Bold. She is handſome, but cold—cold as a billiard ball. Away with that beauty, who promiſes as little enjoyment as the flower in the hand of the Queen of Clubs.

Ditt. Damn the Queen of Clubs; ſhe reminds me of the ill-luck I had yeſterday.

Baron Bold. You play with ſuch an honourable indifference; with ſo much negligence; the Counteſs is quite charmed with you. She ſaid "this young man may in time become a favorite in our circles;" then ſpoke of an ancient family extinct of the ſame name, in Thuringen, and was of opinion, that by tracing back your pedigree, it might probably be diſcovered that you are a deſcendent of the ſame.

Ditt. And what of all that? I am of opinion, my family are deſcendents of the man in armour on the Dutch ducats.

Baron Bold. Bon, bon, ha, ha, ha, ventre bleu! We forget our billiards; ſhall we play a game for ten of thoſe men of your family?

Ditt. (takes his hat and ſtick)—If you give me eight points.

[*Both exit.*

SCENE IX.

FLINK *alone.*

Flink. Eight points? That he may give him on the table of chance, and ſtill win the match. Yes, yes, this game is a picture of life; he that underſtands ſcheming, let his ball roll gently, and will gain his point, without exciting any commotion; but he that always forces his ball, in order to make a brilliant appearance, will overſhoot his mark here, and loſe himſelf elſewhere.

SCENE X.

A Room in Mrs. ERLEN'S *Houſe.*

Mrs. Erlen, (Alone, knitting; a book laying open upon the table before her, in which, at the ſame time, ſhe is reading, ſmiling, and ſhaking her head)—Again a fall out about romances; muſt every thing be called fanaticiſm that is not quite agreeable to cuſtom? when I was young, Poets wrote their ſonnets of love under a thatched roof, and were contented with bread and milk. Twenty years later, this ſweet contentment is turned into ridicule; but with me it remains, and I revere it; forbearance at the ſide of a good huſband, ceaſes to be an art, or a ſacrifice. Is my life a romance? Has not experience ſpoken juſtly to my heart? Are we not poor! very poor! yet where is the wife with whom I would change condition?

SCENE XI.

Enter Enſign ERLEN.

Enſign Erlen. Good morning, dear mother.

Mrs. Erlen. Welcome, dear Charles. What do you bring me?

Erl. My whole heart, and the half of my pay.

Mrs. Erl. Dear boy! how can you content yourſelf with ſo little?

Erl. Were not you contented, when with a ſmall income you defrayed the great expences of my liberal education?

Mrs. Erl. We lived retired and ſparingly; but you muſt do honour to your ſervice.

Erl. If ever the Prince ſhould aſk me, why my coat looks ſo ſhabby? my anſwer will not, I think, diſgrace his ſervice.

Mrs. Erl. You are young, and ſhould enjoy life.

Erl. I do. By putting theſe little ſavings monthly upon your table, I am furniſhed each time with four weeks enjoyment of life.

Mrs. Erl. But your brother officers will think you avaricious, or do they perhaps—

Erl. Stop, mother!

Mrs. Erl. You will expoſe yourſelf to their mockery.

Erl. Better than if my conſcience were to mock my heart.

Mrs. Erl. (*Embraces him and claſps him in her arms*)—Dear Charles! what prince is rich enough to buy of me the penſion you beſtow.

SCENE XII.

Enter SOPHIA.

Sophia. (*Who on beholding her brother in her mother's arms, runs up to them*)—Spare a ſmall corner for me, brother—(*Careſſing her mother.*)

Mrs. Erl. Sophia here alſo? Children you procure me a chearful morning.

Sophia. Welcome, dear brother; we have not ſeen each other this long while.

Erl. Is that my fault? Why do you forbid my coming to ſee you?

Mrs. Erl. What! have you forbidden him?

Sophia. Certainly; he is an officer—the world ſhould not know that his ſiſter is in ſervitude.

Erl. Fie, Sophia! I have a great inclination to put it in the newſpapers this very day.

Sophia. Very well, Mr. Splutterer; if you are ever ſo much inclined, I have only the wiſh of keeping my ſituation in life a ſecret, to prevent your being ſneered at in the honourable one you hold, in the ſervice of a great Prince.

Erl. He that could do that, would only brand his own.

Sophia. In the eyes of the reaſonable; but they are as ſcarce as thoſe people who have not had the ſmall-pox.

Mrs. Erl. She is right.

Sophia. "Enſign Erlen is brave," I often hear thy old Colonel ſay when he viſits the Counteſs, ſometimes at her toilet—my eyes be-

come moiſt with tears, and the comb trembles in my hand—I get reproved for my negligence; but that I do not mind in hearing my brother well ſpoken of.

Erl. And the word, brother, never eſcapes your lips?

Sophia. Have I not lived long enough in the great world, to know what impreſſion that would make on the Colonel? Surely, it would give him an opportunity of calling out to you on the parade, "Mr. Erlen, I have ſeen your ſiſter this morning, ſhe underſtands curling and hair-dreſſing very prettily."

Erl. Well! and what of that—

Mrs. Erl. She is right, dear ſon.

Erl. I think not, mother; the Counteſs already knows—

Sophia. The Counteſs has too much pride to trouble herſelf about my ſurname—ſhe calls me Sophia, and that is all.

Erlen. A good and noble heart is a charter for all ranks.

Sophia. Sit down at the writing-deſk, Mr. Philoſopher! and convert all ranks by your proverbs: enough for me, that as before, in the houſe of the Counteſs I ſhall always drop a courteſy to Enſign Erlen; but in this houſe here, he is my dear brother Charles.

Erl. Here, and every where.

Sophia. Stop ſir, What in this world ought to be done, is done, and dares not to be done—the ſons of Adam muſt learn from us, Eve's daughters.

Erl. Only, however, when you are not in love.

Sophia. Well recollected; and now, dear mother, here is a ſmall portion of my ſavings. *(Puts into her hand two pieces of gold.)*

Mrs. Erl. So ſoon again, my child?

Sophia. The Counteſs made me a preſent yeſterday of a caſt off dreſs, which I have diſpoſed of.

Mrs. Erl. You deprive yourſelf, dear girl—your dreſs is plain—

Sophia. But neat: is it not?

Erl. I feel concerned, mother. Sophia does more than me.

Mrs. Erl. (to Sophia)—This moment he brought me half his pay.

[*Sophia embraces her brother.*

Erl. That is all nothing; but a girl of eighteen giving up a fine dreſs—

Sophia. Dear brother, if I did not know you to be a young officer, I ſhould have gueſſed it by your jeſting.

Mrs. Erl. But Sophia! what ſays the Counteſs to your always appearing before her in your own plain dreſs, when ſhe gives you preſents of finer?

Sophia. If her ladyſhip is diſpleaſed, I ſay I have put into the lottery, that is a ſort of gambling—in her eyes any game is pardonable.

Mrs. Erl. I entreat you both, not to make known to your father

your aſſiſtance—his noble pride would rather let him ſtarve, than live on your beneficence.

Erl. Yes; if he calls that beneficence which love and duty require.

Sophia. It is beneficence ſurely, but only to ourſelves.

Mrs. Erl. Huſh! I hear him coming.

[*She ſecrets the money.*

SCENE XIII.

Enter Mr. ERLEN.

Mr. Erlen. (With a bundle of papers under his arm; when he ſteps in at the door, ſtarts)—Heydey! I have juſt left a fine furniſhed houſe, but my hut is much more finely ornamented—*(ſon and daughter go to meet and kiſs him)*—Be welcome children! be welcome! how do you do?

Sophia. Very well, dear father.

Mr. Erlen. And you?

Erl. Tolerable.

Mr. Erlen. Why but tolerable?

Erl. You know I have but little inclination for a ſoldier's life; beſides, I want—

Mr. Erlen. A good and courageous heart is all that a ſoldier wants, and that you have I am ſure.

Erl. It is my paternal inheritance.

Mr. Erlen. If that is true, you are a rich heir, although, theſe walls are bare.

Erl. I ſhould yet be happy if I thought you ſo.

Mr. Erlen. Am I then otherwiſe? Can you doubt my happineſs in the preſence of your mother?

Erl. Want, at your advancing age.

Mr. Erlen. What do you call want? Thoſe who can ſupply their needs are well ſupported.

Erl. Can you do that?

Mr. Erlen. Oh, yes! for I am content; do you think we go hungry to bed? Your mother's dear hands prepare daily what my induſtry produces, and our plain food is well ſavoured with her conſtant ſerenity. Should you perceive tears in her eyes, the ſmoke of the kitchen fire is the cauſe of them.

Mrs. Erl. Yes, my good Erlen, I ſhould be contented, ſatisfied, if ly—

Mr. Erlen. No one lives on earth, whoſe contentment is not at times croſſed by an, if only—let us hear the tendency of your's?

Mrs. Erl. If only—Sophia were not obliged to ſerve.

Mr. Erlen. To ſerve! what means that? Were ſhe rich, proud, vain—then would ſhe ſerve, and what a ſervitude? My daughter is a chamber-maid; but that guards her probably from the misfortune of becoming her own ſlave.

Mrs. Erl. It grieves me to think ſhe is a ſtranger in our houſe.

Mr. Erlen. *(preſſing Sophia's hand)* She will never be a ſtranger in our hearts. Believe me, children, believe it from my experience, that life's enjoyment may be collected from the moſt common plants, if pains are taken to learn the art of the induſtrious bees, how to penetrate into the very heart of the flower.

Mrs. Erl. That art you have always practiſed under your preſſing difficulties and diſtreſſes.

Mr. Erlen. And rejoice at the elaſticity of my ſpirit.

Mrs. Erl. You have again brought home a large heap of papers.

Mr. Erlen. Yes, God be thanked! here is work for a whole month, and if only—there, now I have caught myſelf at an, if only—

Mrs. Erl. Intruſt it to your family.

Mr. Erlen. I was going to ſay, if only my debts were paid, that anxiety might no longer lay at the hearts of my creditors, nor at my own.

Mrs. Erlen. I don't know—to day—but let us hope.

[*Mr.* Erlen *draws his hand acroſs his forehead.*

Sophia. How was it poſſible, my father, that by your induſtry—

Erl. How can you aſk, Sophia? Conſider the expence of our education—

Mr. Erlen. The expence of your education has been defrayed from a capital which is inexhauſtible—fatherly love accompliſhed it. No, my dear children, a misfortune that befel me ten years ago, has thrown us back ſo far, that at my advanced age, it will be impoſſible by my labour to bring you forward again.

Mrs. Erl. We were both poor when we married; but we had, through care, ſaved up a pretty capital.

Mr. Erl. Seven thouſand dollars.

Mrs. Erlen. Which your father took to the old banker, Ditthelm.

Sophia, (much perplexed) Ditthelm!

Mr. Erlen. He was my friend.

Erl. and cheated you?

Mr. Erlen. That would have hurt me much more than the loſs of my money. No, he meant well with me; was to have given me a ſhare in his flouriſhing buſineſs: it ſo happened, that juſt when I took

to him the ſaved-up ſum, he was overwhelmed with buſineſs, and could not at that moment give me a receipt for it.

Mrs. Erl. He wiſhed your father to take the money back again, and return with it the next morning—

Mr. Erlen. Why ſhould I? Was I not aſſured of the integrity of my friend?

Mrs. Erl. In about half an hour after, by a paralytic ſtroke—

Mr. Erlen. I loſt a proved friend.

Mrs. Erl. And the indefatigable earnings of eight tedious years.

Sophia. (with vehemence) What! could his ſon be ſo baſe as to deny the debt?

Mr. Erlen. His ſon was then a child—the executors and guardians did their duty. I had no vouchers.

Erl. But his books—your word—your oath—

Mr. Erlen. The ſum was not entered in his books. Herrmann, his truſty clerk, was queſtioned about it—every place was ſearched—I deſcribed the notes, the paper they were put in—all was in vain! Nothing could be found. God only knows what became of the money.

Sophia. Poor farher! what you muſt have felt.

Mr. Erlen. Aſk your mother if ſhe perceived any change in me? I walked in the fields for a few hours to recover myſelf; there I ſhed tears, but they were devoted to my friend—not to my money. Nor, till the next morning, did I diſcloſe to your good mother, what I feared would have occaſioned her a ſleepleſs night.

Mrs. Erl. How willingly would I have ſhared it with thee.

Mr. Erlen. She conducted herſelf on this trying occaſion with fortitude and greatneſs of ſoul. We had a cook, ſhe undertook that office herſelf. I kept for you a tutor, but then became myſelf your inſtructor—ſo one calamitous moment brought forth many a cheerful hour—for misfortune is an incident that animates our faculties, and gives new vigour to our vital ſpirits. We have lived ſparingly, and were contented.

Mrs. Erl. Your father, as he divided his time between his children and his buſineſs, could not certainly earn ſo much as he had done before.

Mr. Erlen. But yet we were contented, and are ſo ſtill—Enough, children, and already too much of a luckleſs hour, as I count my good fortune by years. Dear wife, have you thought of providing to welcome our gueſts? Is the cloth laid?

Mrs. Erl. A couple of cabbages out of our own garden is all that I can ſet before them.

Mr. Erlen. Do you know what Gothé ſays? "How happy am I that my heart feels the ſimple, harmleſs joy of that man who brings on his table a cabbage of his own raiſing." And dare I add, how

happy am I, who aſſemble round my table, children who have grown up healthy under my attentive care—who give a luſtre to poverty through their virtuous pride—and who reward with affection, what parental love has done for them. Come children! come to my arms!

[*Enſign Erlin and Sophia, haſten towards him, and fall into his arms. Mrs. Erlen wipes from her cheek a tear of affection.—The curtain drops.*

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

ACT II. *SCENE I.*

A public walk adjoining to a ſtreet, of which ſome houſes are viſible.

Madame LUPPNITZ *and* EMILY.

Emily. (*Is ſeated on a bench, playing with her fan and yawning: Madame Luppnitz walking backwards and forwards, looking about*)—Time hangs very heavily on my hands.

Madame Lup. You are uſually very much for walking.

Emily. Oh, yes, in the evening, when there is a variety of company; but at preſent, trees are the only objects to look at.

Mad. Lup. Which the ſeaſon of ſpring has covered with bloſſoms.

Emily. And one only gets freckled.

Mad. Lup. Don't you hear the nightingale?

Emily. With a great deal of pleaſure do I hear the frogs, for now I ſhall ſoon have their ſpawn for my waſh-water.

Mad. Lup. And alſo bean-bloſſoms—is it not true?

Emily. Yes, the bloſſom of beans makes a very ſoft ſkin.

Mad. Lup. Very ſoon, my dear, you will have no occaſion for thoſe arts.

Emily. Why not?

Mad. Lup. You will be married.

Emily. Shall I then no longer ſtrive to appear handſome?

Mad. Lup. A huſband accuſtoms himſelf to any thing.

Emily. Yes! a huſband—but there are other gentlemen beſides him; and then the want of amuſement—

Mad. Lup. For that we have aſſemblies, and town-talk—matrimonial differences, and domeſtic pleaſures. At preſent, dear child, employ your thoughts only about what you ſhould wiſh to have for your bridal dreſs.

Emily. White ſattin with lilac riband.

Mad. Lup. Then ſhort and good—the romance between you and Ditthelm muſt be at an end.

Emily. That is a pity.

Mad. Lup. Love delayed is like a journey poſtponed, which in the end comes to nothing.

Emily. Is it then my fault?

Mad. Lup. I know three or four mothers who have alſo the ſame intention; we muſt, therefore, be before them.

Emily. But how?

Mad. Lup. This young gentleman flutters about, and warbles ſo ſweetly, it is time to ſinge his wings; and this very day I will provide a brother for you.

Emily. A brother!—ha, ha, ha! that is comical. Where will you find a brother for me?

Mad. Lup. Leave that to me.

Emily. But I wiſh a huſband not a brother.

Mad. Lup. Although my plan is not a new one, yet it is ingenious and ſecure. I have a youth in view, who about this time uſually goes to yonder tavern—I will ſound him on the ſubject; and if I find him ſuited to my purpoſe, he may appear in the fifth act this very day.

Emily. How do you intend to name the play?

Mad. Lup. Le Mariage Forcé—*(looking about at a diſtance)* —Look, look! here comes the ſelected knight, and had nearly ſurprized us. Go in, my dear Emily, I will ſpeak to him without a witneſs.

Emily. In the mean time I will try on my new morning dreſs.—*(She goes into the neareſt houſe.)*

Mad. Lup. If my informers have not deceived me, then is this juſt the man to my wiſh—haſty—determined—and a poor, half-ſtarved wretch.

SCENE II.

Enter Enſign ERLIN—*and as he is going acroſs the Stage,* Madame LUPPNITZ *ſteps in his way.*

Mad. Lup. With your permiſſion, Sir—Captain—or——

Erl. At preſent, Madam, only Enſign. May I beg to be favoured with your commands?

Mad. Lup. If I am not miſtaken in you——

Erl. It depends for what you take me.

Mad. Lup. For a young gentleman who is more favored by nature than by fortune.

Erl. Your laſt conjecture, I confeſs is fact.

Mad. Lup. It is very well known that the pay of an Enſign is not conſiderable.

Erl. Yes, that is well known.

Mad. Lup. And that ſome additional property of one's own is neceſſary to make the ſituation agreeable.

Erl. Yes, if one has any.

Mad. Lup. To be ſure, in war time, one may get booty.

Erl. Booty! I am no plunderer.

Mad. Lup. At your age one wiſhes to enjoy life, and make the moſt of time.

Erl. To what does that tend?

Mad. Lup. I am—Madame Luppnitz.

Erl. (*Making a bow*) Very well.

Mad. Lup. I have often obſerved you with concern.

Erl. I thank you.

Mad. Lup. And conſidered in what manner I might be of ſervice to you.

Erl. I am contented.

Mad. Lup. Preſents, I thought, you would not condeſcend to accept.

Erl. There you thought perfectly right.

Mad. Lup. But if an opportunity ſhould offer wherein you might render me eſſential ſervice———

Erl. I!—you, Madam———

Mad. Lup. I judged, in that caſe, a purſe full of ducats, as a token of my gratitude, would not be refuſed.

Erl. Let us hear it.

Mad. Lup. I have a daughter—a very good and a very handſome girl.

Erl. I congratulate you.

Mad. Lup. And ſhe has a lover.

Erl. That is very natural.

Mad. Lup. A young merchant.

Erl. As yet, I do not perceive what all this can be to me.

Mad. Lup. You will ſoon hear, this lover is a coxcomb.

Erl. Then ſend him adrift.

Mad. Lup. Heaven forbid!—he is very rich.

Erl. (*Ironically*) It is then your duty, as a mother, to link him cloſely, which will require your wanted dexterity.

Mad. Lup. True, my dear Sir—I perceive you are a very ſenſible young gentleman, and have great penetration. Money and luck go hand in hand; and although they do not always enſure domeſtic happineſs, yet they are found to diſperſe a variety of pleaſures all over this wide world.

Erl. There are enthuſiaſts who deny that.

Mad. Lup. Away with them—let them be fifty years old, and then try if enthuſiaſm will avail them.

Erl. (*aſide*) Excellent parents!

Mad. Lup. Your ſuperior judgment gives me encouragement to explain myſelf more openly to you.

Erl. I wait with the greateſt impatience.

Mad. Lup. This young merchant dangles and prattles, careſſes and flatters; but—

Erl. Delays coming to the point.

Mad. Lup. Well gueſſed. My daughter is young, inexperienced—ſhe does not know rightly how to act with him.

Erl. What! not with the inſtruction of ſo judicious a mother?

Mad. Lup. My dear Sir, I am widow, and without protection. Had the Almighty bleſſed me with a ſon, a dear ſon—he would certainly have brought this affair to a concluſion before now.

Erl. (*impatiently*) And the end of this converſation———

Mad. Lup. Patience!—I am now coming to the point. My motherly affection has put me in mind of adopting a ſon—If it were only for a few weeks.

Erl. And this honour you probably intend to confer on me.

Mad. Lup. (*friendly*) Yes, my dear Sir.

Erl. I am very much obliged to you, Madam. But to what purpoſe?

Mad. Lup. That you will not gueſs. As an officer—as a man of honour—and as brother of Emily—it would be proper you ſhould protect with earneſtneſs the reputation of a ſiſter.

Erl. Siſter or not—that I would moſt willingly every virtuous girl.

Mad. Lup. You muſt come, therefore, to my houſe.

Erl. With great pleaſure.

Mad. Lup. And muſt unperceivedly liſten to a converſation of courtſhip.

Erl. For what purpoſe?

Mad. Lup. You may probably witneſs an exchange of kiſſes.

Erl. And then——

Mad. Lup. Then ſtart ſuddenly before them, talk of injured honour, and of bloody vengeance, and demand of him to give ſatisfaction.

Erl. Now I comprehend.

Mad. Lup. The reward ſhall be on the ſpot.

Erl. But—ſhould he not attend to my threats———

Mad. Lup. Here a handſome girl, and there a naked ſword—he will wiſely chooſe.

Erl. And ſhould this trick hereafter be diſcovered———

Mad. Lup. I hardly know of a marriage where there has not ſome trick or other been diſcovered—one muſt reconcile that, and be ſilent.

Erl. But if this young man ſhould know me?

Mad. Lup. Be unconcerned: I have acquainted myſelf of that beforehand.

Erl. What is his name?

Mad. Lup. Ditthelm.

Erl. (ſurprized) Ditthelm!—him, it is——

Mad. Lup. You ſeem to know him.

Erl. Only by ſight.

Mad. Lup. Then you agree to my requeſt?

Erl. (After a little conſideration) But ſuppoſe, Madam, I were this very inſtant to go to him, and diſcloſe this plot?

Mad. Lup. (Smiling ſcornfully) Go, Sir,—we were without witneſs. He will much ſooner attend to the tears of my beautiful daughter than to the words of a ſtranger—perhaps of a contemptible rival.

Erl. You are right. The ſkilful mother has conſidered every thing?

Mad. Lup. Every thing.

Erl. I am your ſon, and obey.

Mad. Lup. Excellent!—I expect you this afternoon.

Erl. The ſooner the better.

Mad. Lup. The ſecond floor of that houſe is my apartment.

Erl. Very well.

Mad. Lup. That handſome girl, who is lolling behind the curtain, is your ſiſter.

Erl. I underſtand.

[HADEBRATH *has, at the latter part of this converſation, walked ſeveral times up and down at the back part of the ſtage.*

Mad. Lup. We ſhould have yet talked over many things: but I perceive a man ſculking about there, whoſe countenance I do not like. Farewell, truſty ſon.

Erl. Dear mother, I am your's faithfully.

[*Madame Luppnitz goes into the houſe.*

Erl. (*In deep thought*) Hem!—Singular!—Is poverty, then, held forth as a ſign of the abode of roguery?—Ditthelm! that it ſhould juſt happen to be him!—Oh! that delights me.

SCENE III.

HADEBRATH *with a black Beard and Wig—his Dreſs changed, with a miniature Picture in his Hand—ſpeaks about* ERLEN *unperceived, and ſeems to be comparing it with him.*

Hade. (Aſide) Yes, yes, I ſhall hardly find a better likeneſs. Light-hair—a longiſh face, a Roman noſe—As for the reſt, that is done by ſmoke, according to the cuſtom.

Erl. (Still in deep thought) Whether mother and daughter agree in this intrigue ?

Hade. (aſide, viewing Erlin from head to foot) A worn-out uniform—coarſe cloth—and ſeemingly his hair dreſſed by himſelf. I think he is my man.

Erl. Handſome !—ſhe is very handſome.

Hade. A very intereſting ſoliloquy.

Erl. Should ſhe poſſeſs as much knowledge as beauty———

Hade. Probably he is in love.

Erl. I ſhall find it difficult to conquer.

Hade. So much the better. Then he wants money.

Erl. However, I will act as I ought. Why concern myſelf for the conſequence ?—*(Is going.)*

Hade. (Steps in his way to prevent him) Can I be of any ſervice to you, Sir ?

Erl. No, Sir,

Hade. Then let me reverſe the queſtion—Will you be of ſervice to me ?

Erl. Why not ?—with a great deal of pleaſure.

Hade. Be it underſtood, that you may rely on a reward, in token o my gratitude.

Erl. Fair dealings require no reward.

Hade. The intention is really good.

Erl. But the contrivance———

Hade is a joke.

Erl. I will promote it with pleaſure.

Hade. I want a ghoſt.

Erl. Why am I thus honoured as to be choſen for a ghoſt ?

Hade. I only mean to repreſent one.

Erl. Perhaps you are a proprietor of a dilettanti theatre ?

Hade. No—one of my friends is an enthuſiaſt, and of this malady I wiſh to cure him.

Erl. That is praiſeworthy.

Hade. He believes in apparitions.

Erl. He ſhould be ridiculed.

Hade. Ridicule may cure fools, but not always enthuſiaſts; for they reſemble a deſcription of children, to whom one muſt give way in order to correct them.

Erl. (diſtruſtful) And to ſummon ghoſts—is that your meaning?

Hade. Well gueſſed.

Erl. And in the end

Hade. My friend will be convinced how eaſily imagination is deceived.

Erl. Really!

Hade. I promiſed him to-day to conjure the ſpirit of his late friend to his view—here is the picture of him—it ſeems as if you had ſat for it.

Erl. I underſtand that I am indebted to this reſemblance for the honour of your acquaintance.

Hade. And alſo for the pleaſure of having ſaved an unfortunate—*(Erlen ſtares at him. Hadebrath, diſcompoſed, continues)*—Why do you look ſo cloſely at me?

Erl. Pray, Sir, what is your name?

Hade. Hadebrath.

Erl. Mr. Hadebrath, you do not deal fairly with me.

Hade. How ſo?

Erl. I do not blame you for it---I have a damned honeſt face; but let not that diſcourage you. I am Enſign Erlen—a poor devil, and conſequently want money. I am not afraid of a little roguery—be open-hearted, and ſpeak your mind freely.

Hade. That I have done.

Erl. No, that you have not done—you intend to pluck the feathers of a chaffinch, and want me to ſerve as the lime-twig.

Hade. (Startled) Sir! I have always been a fair-dealing man.

Erl. Yes, yes, and ſo have I—but no ſimpleton, nor you either.

Hade. Did you but know—No, Sir, I am not quite the man you take me for. Farewell.

Erl. Stop, Sir,—as you have ſo far let me into your deſign, I will be your ghoſt, and will ſhare with you the profit.

Hade. (after conſidering) Well, then, give me your word of honour.

Erl. What has honour to do with roguery?

Hade. (with a ſigh) Roguery?

Erl. Let us then give it a more moderate term. Poverty obliges us to aſk tribute of Credulity.

Hade. Yes, to be ſure poverty does.

Erl. Robbery is too common—but to ſummon ghoſts is a moſt excellent jugg'e.

Hade. I have made no confeſſion—

Erl. No matter—I have gueſſed all.

Hade. Where is your proof?

Erl. (ſnatching the picture from his hand) Here it is; and the right owner of this picture, I hope, will diſcover himſelf.

Hade. (terrified) Softly, ſoftly, dear Sir!—to be ſure it is in your power———

Erl. Why do you tremble? Cheer up, Mr. Hadebrath—I will become your pupil—inſtill into me the myſtery of your art, and you will find a very willing ſcholar.

Hade. Ah!—I am but a ſcholar myſelf.

Erl. What is the name of that blockhead on whom we are to play to-day?

Hade. His name is Ditthelm.

Erl. (ſurprized) Ditthelm?—Ditthelm again!

Hade. (agitated) Are you acquainted with him?

Erl. (diſſembling) No, no.

Hade. A credulous, young, rich merchant—a ſpendthrift.

Erl. Excellent!—*(aſide)*—moſt excellent!

Hade. I am preſſed by the greateſt diſtreſs—he has a ſuperfluity.

Erl. Well, friend, where is the theatre on which our ſkill to-day is to ſhine?

Hade. At my lodgings.

Erl. Then conduct me thither, that I may ſtudy my part, and not be a diſgrace to my maſter.

Hade. But I hope the cuckoo will not lay an egg in our neſt.

Erl. The cuckoo never lays her eggs in the hawk's neſt.—Come, come—(*He takes Hadebrath by the arm and pulls him along.*)

SCENE IV.

A Room in the Houſe of the Counteſs.

Sophia. (*Alone with an open letter in her hand*) Very ſhameful of her Ladyſhip—indeed, it is more than ſhame, to throw ſuch a letter on her toilette like a bill, and not to tear it—Poor Ditthelm! are thoſe your friends?—This Boldenſtern, who calls you twenty times in a breath his *Cher Amie!* and is here making a dupe of you. I have almoſt a mind to give the letter into the hands of this deceived young man—but her Ladyſhip might diſcover its being taken from the toilette—and who elſe could have done it but the daring Sophia?—The reward of my well-meaning treachery would be to turn me out of doors. Were my parents not ſo very poor, with pleaſure would I leave her. No, no, Mr. Ditthelm!—hitherto your behaviour requires not ſuch a ſacrifice. I take your part, although I don't know why; But—*(ſhrugging up her ſhoulders)*—I dare do no more than pity you.

SCENE V.

Enter DITTHELM.

Ditt. Quite alone, Miſs?

Sophia. (ſtarts, conceals the letter, and takes out her knitting.)

Ditt. And her Ladyſhip—

Sophia. Is taking an airing; but requeſts you will wait a few minutes.

Ditt. Minutes! why not hours?

Sophia. Alas! then I ſhould be obliged to fetch the cards for you to play—"*Grande Patience.*"

Ditt. You are very jocular; but the man who invented cards ſurely was not in ſuch good company.

Sophia. A bleſſing to mankind; for then thouſands would be without them.

Ditt. Do you reckon me among thoſe thouſands?

Sophia. I am counting the ſtitches of my work.

Ditt. Appearances are deceitful.

Sophia. A true ſaying; but not a new one.

Ditt. Ah!, my dear, if mankind would learn to value ancient truths——

Sophia. That were already ſomething more new.

Ditt. And not accuſtom themſelves to ſeek wiſdom and virtue only in the higher claſſes.

Sophia. Wiſdom and virtue are contented, if they even remain without being ſought after.

Ditt. That is malignancy—

Sophia. As that would be ſtupidity.

Ditt. Or pride.

Sophia. Equally the ſame.

Ditt. Virtue muſt humble itſelf——

Sophia. By no means—it muſt exalt itſelf.

Ditt. Virtue need not veil its brightneſs——

Sophia. But neither need it be a ſky-rocket.

Ditt. That would not be amiſs, as it might attract the multitude.

Sophia. On the ſilent evening ſtar only, hangs the glimpſe of wiſdom.

Ditt. Excellent girl! whence have you imbibed ſuch principles?

Sophia. No praiſe to your daily companions, if my principles are thus diſtinguiſhable.

Ditt. The choice of companions in the great world is alſo a game of chance.

Sophia. And one of the worſt.

Ditt. Not always——

Sophia. Always.

Ditt. Am I then not obliged to chance for your company?

Sophia. I do not belong to the great world.

Ditt. Oh, then—neither do I wiſh to belong to it; for no where am I ſo happy as with you. You ſmile, and are ſilent.

Sophia. Doubt is the characteriſtic of the preſent century.

Ditt. That you ſhould never have obſerved, it was your company only made this houſe agreeable to me.

Sophia. (laughing) Fine words!

Dit. I am a merchant, and value truth and fair dealing.

Sophia. Yes, if your conſcience were the book-keeper——

Ditt. My heart I value moſt among my goods.

Sophia. Fie! who would make merchandize of his heart?

Ditt. But one may give it away.

Sophia. Young men and children give away every thing, but ſoon take them back again.

Ditt. Put me to the trial?

Sophia. I, Sir! you forget what I am!

Ditt. You are not what you ought to be.

Sophia. Do not perſuade me to think that; it might be dangerous were I to believe it.

Ditt. How ſo?

Sophia. Woe be to thoſe who do not ſuit themſelves to their ſituations.

Ditt. Why do you not alter yours?

Sophia. That is an unuſual queſtion.

Ditt. You ſerve, and might command.

Sophia. I am content if I have a command over myſelf.

Ditt. A variety of ways preſent themſelves to beauty—

Sophia. Of vice—

Ditt. Of love—

Sophia. Alas! love often is vice alſo.

Ditt. Your deportment ennobles every feeling—

Sophia. (jokingly) Do I then reſemble thoſe in whoſe hands all would be turned to gold?

Ditt. With this perfection, of ſoul and body——

Sophia. You only flatter me—ſurely, Mr. Ditthelm, you would do better to play "*Grande Patience.*"

Ditt. Why this ſeverity toward an honeſt man?

Sophia. Why this ridicule toward an honeſt girl.

Ditt. I ridicule a girl whoſe influence makes me revere female virtue!—whoſe picture, even in the whirl of diſſipation, reſtores recollection to my mind!—I ridicule! when my heart—

Ditt. (after a pauſe) May I beg your name?

Fern. My name is Fernau.

Ditt. Fernau! *(bethinks himſelf)* Fernau! quite right; I remember the name—have often found it in my father's books—Fernau—I even recollect a buſineſs tranſacted by which my father gained conſiderably; yet I think it was finally ſettled between you.

Fern. Pardon me, you miſtake—.

Ditt. No, no, I miſtake not: it was in the year—no matter, that has ſlipped my memory; but I remember clearly that a balance remained due to you.

Fern. To me?

Ditt. Yes, to you, to Captain Fernau; probably my father was not acquainted with the place of your abode——

Fern. Ay, ay.

Ditt. Or muſt have forgotten it; however the caſe is clear.

Fern. Once more you miſtake.

Ditt. Nay, I will prove it to you from my books, the moment you come to me; in the mean time, I muſt inſiſt that you will allow me, as immediate relief is requiſite, to preſent you at leaſt with a part of the debt at this very inſtant (*offers him what he has in his pocket-book.*)

Fern. No, Sir, you are not indebted to me.

Ditt. Would you diſgrace my father in his grave?

Fern. I underſtand you.

Ditt. Thanks to chance that gives me an opportunity of making amends for his neglect.

Fern. You are your father's worthy ſon.

Sophia. (*aſide*) Now he deſerves that I ſhould venture ſomething for him. (*ſhe retires.*)

Fern. You have through your conduct ſweetened a bitter draught, and alſo mitigated a painful affliction; even that is beneficence; I eſteem and pity you—regard therefore my precaution, gather fruit from my ſad example. My motive for refuſing your gift is not pride—Ah! it is the firſt time in my life that I have been offered charity—ſoon, perhaps, when the utmoſt degree of need preſſes me, and in the laſt ſtruggle I am forced to ſtifle this delicate feeling—then, good young man, then will I come to you: 'till then farewell. (*Preſſes Ditthelm's hand: in going off wipes a tear from his eyes*)

SCENE VII.

Ditt. (*alone*) Poor old man, I pity him—his misfortunes he ſurely brought upon himſelf; but what is that to me? it is an ungenerous mode by which men juſtify themſelves in not ſhewing compaſſion to

their fellow-creatures, who condemn the unfortunate merely to have an excuſe for not aſſiſting. Fie!—I think he accuſes the Counteſs wrongfully; could ſhe help it? did ſhe entice him? or Boldenſtern? The Captain ſeemed to apprehend it—he may miſtake—his loſſes make him unjuſt—(*pauſe*) and yet ſhould it be ſo? ſhould they entice me alſo? empty my purſe, and afterwards diſpenſe with my viſits in the like manner—no, no. Boldenſtern is ſurely my friend, and the Counteſs a fine declaimer of moral principles.

SCENE VIII.

Enter a Boy.

Boy. A letter for Mr. Ditthelm.

Ditt. For me! from whom?

Boy. That Sir, I don't know. [*Exit.*

Ditt. (opening the letter; one encloſed falls on the ground)—Another? *(takes it up, and unfolds the firſt*—from an unknown hand—*(reads)* "Regard a friend's advice; you are impoſed upon—the encloſed will convince you." Ay! let's ſee the proof—*(opens the letter)*—it ſeems as if Boldenſtern had written it!—(*looks at the ſignature)*—Yes, yes it is—*(reads)* "Be not apprehenſive, dear Counteſs, our chaffinch ſtill flutters in the ſnare." Chaffinch! I hope I am not the chaffinch—"his father, the old Jew, has left him ſuch ſhining feathers, that he well deſerves to have them plucked out by your fine hands—his loſs of yeſterday is by this time forgotten, and I dare ſay he will not fail to pay his reſpects to your Ladyſhip this evening again, to receive another lecture. Your faithful allied Boldenſtern."—Excellent! receive my thanks honorable friend—you have certainly given me a leſſon which I ſhall not forget ſo ſoon. A chaffinch! yes, yes, you are perhaps not quite in the wrong. I appear to myſelf at this moment damnably ſilly—in regard to the feathers which her Ladyſhip in future moſt graciouſly will condeſcend to pluck out, I muſt beg her to be contented with thoſe that already ſtick on the lime twig—*(pauſe)*—who may this ſtranger be, that means ſo well with me?—(*looking at the letter)*—a woman's hand—ſhould Sophia? yes, Sophia; who elſe? No one but Sophia could get poſſeſſion of this letter—Surely it is her; and if I do not miſtake, this unfolds ſomething more than mere concern for my fate—ſomething of importance that ſhe wiſhes to communicate to me. Ay, ſo much the better—he that has won Sophia's love and regard, has he loſt his money?—love! and ſhould ſhe really love—how then? could I miſuſe a girl's inclination who ſo generouſly cautioned me?—Heaven forbid!—But what do I want?—*(ſighing)*—know I that myſelf? Firſt I muſt be ſure whether this letter is ac-

tually her own hand writing; how can I find it out? aſk her, ſhe will not own it—to compare the letter with her own hand-writing would be beſt—but how can I get a ſight of it? artifice and accident muſt aſſiſt me.—*(remains in thought.)*

SCENE IX.

Enter SOPHIA.

Sophia. (aſide.) He is conſidering; it has had effect.

Ditt. Exactly right, my charming Sophia; here I ſtand, and conſider in what manner I ſhall expreſs my gratitude to you.

Sophia. To me?

Ditt. You have done me a great ſervice

Sophia. I done you a ſervice! O yes, I remember, you mean the mending of your ruffles which you had torn the other day.

Ditt. By no means; I mean by the letter you wrote to me.

Sophia. I? Fie, Sir! Who do you take me for?

Ditt. For a good and virtuous girl.

Sophia. I don't write letters to gentlemen; and moreover I do not underſtand how to write.

Ditt. (holds the letter up to her) Is that not your hand?

Sophia. Why do you aſk that queſtion?

Ditt. Yes, or no?

Sophia. No! no, Sir, I only uſe my hands to needle-work and knitting.

Ditt. (diſſembling) Hem, then I muſt have been miſtaken.

Sophia. To what do you allude? what is the object?

Ditt. No matter, I miſtook—*(changes the converſation)*—Do you know that the old Captain has quite affected me?

Sophia. He merits compaſſion.

Ditt. And yet he would take nothing of me.

Sophia. That is like him.

Ditt. It was perhaps my fault; the art of giving is more difficult than the art of accepting—

Sophia. very true.

Ditt. I know many whom I moſt willingly wiſh to aſſiſt, but ſeldom do I ſucceed.

Sophia. Even the good intention is meritorious.

Ditt. I have hit upon a ſcheme by which in future I might beſtow my ſmall donations through a third hand; what do you think of it?

Sophia. The idea proves that you are really in earneſt ſo to do.

Ditt. All depends upon finding a perſon who would willingly undertake the trouble—

Sophia. Surely it is a very agreeable trouble.

Ditt. Indeed! perhaps I have found that perſon—

Sophia. How do you mean?

Ditt. I have confidence in you—

Sophia. I am glad to hear it.

Ditt. Will you aſſiſt me in doing good?

Sophia. If I can, with all my heart.

Ditt. Done; it is ſettled; I will deliver to you from time to time ſmall ſums, for which you will give me a receipt; you then will beſtow the money according to my wiſhes, and without mentioning my name.

Sophia. A commiſſion that will do honour to us both.

Ditt. Well then, let us begin this inſtant to put the good deſign into execution. My old honeſt book-keeper this very morning reminded me of an old friend of my father's who now ſuffers want—he is noble minded and proud; it will be difficult to compel him to accept any thing of me; I am ſure he will not; you muſt therefore acquit yourſelf of your promiſe, and make the trial.

Sophia. I will to the utmoſt of my ability.

Ditt. It is a certain councellor—his name is Erlen!

Sophia. *(ſurpriſed)* Erlen!

Ditt. Do you know him?

Sophia. *(trying to recover)* No, I have heard of him.

Ditt. Probably much that is good.

Sophia. Yes, ſurely.

Ditt. Well, then take—here are one hundred dollars.

Sophia. So much?

Ditt. I owe him perhaps a great deal more; yet, were it not ſo, he was my father's confidential friend; take it.

Sophia. *(takes the money, and with a trembling voice)* I thank you in his name.

Ditt. That mine will not be mentioned you pledge your word.

Sophia. I gave it.

Ditt. Caution and delicacy I muſt recommend.

Sophia. My heart will act.

Ditt. Then let me beg for a receipt.

Sophia. For what reaſon?

Ditt. You will excuſe; it is cuſtomary with merchants never to give money without—here is a writing-deſk—only a few words.

Sophia. *(goes to the deſk)* What ſhall I write?

Ditt. "One hundred dollars for a ſecret charity." Nothing elſe?—*(Sophia writes; Ditthelm looks over her ſhoulder, and betrays his joy.)*

Sophia. *(gives him the receipt)* Is this right?

Ditt. Perfectly! *(compares it with the letter)*—but pray obſerve, dear Sophia, what an extraordinary accident! one would almoſt ſwear the good friend that warned me before, and the amiable receipt writer, were but one perſon.

Sophia. *(much embarraſſed)* How ſo?

Ditt. Do but compare—the firſt glance will convince you.

Sophia. Indeed the hands do in ſome degree reſemble each other.

Ditt. In ſome degree only?——O Sophia! will you ſtill deny it?

Sophia. *(rather offended)* I did not think that you would make uſe of artifice in beſtowing benefactions.

Ditt. Nay, hear me; I only made two throws with one ſtone.

Sophia. Well, yes Mr. Ditthelm, I did write the letter; my intention was good.

Ditt. I don't doubt it.

Sophia. An act out of love to mankind——

Ditt. Away with that! love is ſo fine a word, that all one can put before it, only diſfigures.

Sophia. *(ſmiling)* Love! you are vain.

Ditt. Proud and fortunate if I have ſpoken truth——

Sophia. We poor creatures are badly off; we dare not even do good.

Ditt. Why not?

Sophia. Becauſe our actions, though ever ſo pure are conſtrued into love.

Ditt. Charity is love.

Sophia. I therefore ſwear, were you to fall into the water this very day, I would hold out my finger.

Ditt. *(entreating)* But the whole hand?

Sophia. Will you venture upon it?

Ditt. Yes, yes, although you hide your affection behind a facetious ſcreen, yet I know you love—can read it in your eyes.

Sophia. O Sir! in the eyes of women, and in a Chineſe book, one learns at beſt but ſpelling.

Ditt. 'Tis to no purpoſe! I will not let you eſcape—*(with warmth)*—it is not from to-day that your modeſty and goodneſs have fettered my attention; it is not from to-day that your charms and virtue have captivated my heart; I have long bore affection—*(takes hold of her hand)*—I love you!

Sophia. *(with reſerve)* Stop, Mr. Ditthelm! the leaſt I expect is to deſerve your eſteem.

Ditt. Eſteem and love are ſiſters.

Sophia. Your declaration is, cenſured with the utmoſt mildneſs, a youthful raſhneſs.

Ditt. God! let me continue in it 'till I am grey with age!

Sophia. I am only a ſervant.

Ditt. And I a merchant. Shall prejudice deprive me of my happineſs? you are poor—would to heaven I were the ſame! then ſhould I have the merit of working for you. You are perhaps of poor parents? name them to me, that I may fly and convince them that I ſhall pride myſelf in calling an honeſt tradeſman—Father!

Sophia. For God's ſake Mr. Ditthelm! whither does a raſh attachment miſlead you? you forget your ſituation and rank. Repentance is always an adder—but repentance in wedlock is hell on earth! I therefore beg and beſeech you, diſturb not my tranquility.

Ditt. Have youthful errors ſo debaſed me in your opinion, that you believe me entirely void of feeling? are there no examples that young extravagant men have been converted by the prudence of a wife, and become ſteady and domeſtic?

Sophia. The trial is always dangerous.

Ditt. I perceive it daily more and more, that ſuch a wife is alone wanting to make me what I wiſh to be; I ſhould have felt it, even had old Herrmann not reminded me. O! be you this wife! you have perhaps ſaved my parental inheritance: ſave alſo my heart.

Sophia. Mr. Ditthelm, your ecſtacy is merely paſſion of youth, of which I dare not take advantage; to prove it to you, that you may not be miſtaken in me, I refuſe your hand.

Ditt. (*much hurt*) Sophia!

Sophia. Leſt you ſhould think me inſenſible, I add, that I do it unwillingly.

Ditt. Oh then ſhall I not allow it! in vain do you reſiſt againſt the power of love: virtue may alſo go beyond the proper bounds. Dear lovely girl, you have fulfilled the ſtricteſt demands of propriety; yield now to my ſofter entreaties.

Sophia. (*confuſed*) Mr. Ditthelm, give me time———

Ditt. No, no, you are now affected; this feeling muſt not grow cold—even now you muſt anſwer me.

Sophia. I cannot; I am not at my own diſpoſal.

Ditt. On whom do you depend? where live the good people that educated ſuch a daughter for my future happineſs? conduct me thither—be it the meaneſt hut—grant me the pleaſure of furniſhing the authors of your exiſtence with comfort, and of relieving their ſorrows.

Sophia. (*much moved*). Relieve my parents of their ſorrows?

Ditt. Yes, Sophia, let this proſpect confirm your reſolution, if nothing elſe ſpeaks for me in your heart; then will I renounce the irregularities of diſſipation; then will I ſhake off all unworthy fetters, and live only to chain your affection to my heart. This amiable red

on your cheeks—this trembling hand—this ſoft tear in your eye. O Sophia! give your feelings a free ſcope—ſpeak a word of comfort. *(falls on his knees before her.)*

SCENE X.

Enter the COUNTESS *and* BOLDENSTERN *from the middle door, and break out into loud laughter.*

Baron. Bold. Bravo, my friend! a ſcene for the Gods.

Counteſs. Fi donc; Mr. Ditthelm, is that *gentil?—(to Sophia)*—Mademoiſelle be gone to your chamber—*(Sophia goes off)*—You are a ſecond cherubim, from the miſtreſs to the maid.

Bold. My dear friend, why ſo alarmed? the Counteſs is a Lady of the world.

Ditt. Ah!

Count. What! Even an ah! fie, young Ditthelm, leave off ſuch ſenſuality; knight errantry has been long ſince out of faſhion.

Ditt. What you have ſeen, aroſe merely from a wiſh to diſperſe my thoughts.

Count. Well, well; what are they?

Ditt. A ſudden misfortune—

Bold. A misfortune! I hope your fine Engliſh Hunter is not taken ill?

Count. Or the little delicate Pomeranian?

Ditt. O were it only that!

Bold. Still more?

Ditt. It will be known ſoon enough; why ſhould I keep it a ſecret, eſpecially to thoſe of whoſe friendſhip I flatter myſelf.

Count. Monſieur, vous pauvez compter ſur moi.

Bold. Mon ami, je ſuis tout à vous.

Ditt. I am ruined.

Count. (*frightened*) ruined!

Bold. Vous plaiſanter.

Ditt. A bankruptcy at Amſterdam occaſions mine alſo.

Bold. Serieuſement?

Count. C'eſt terrible!

Bold. Could you not in a good manner—you underſtand me—for a man of diſcernment, a bankruptcy is often a profitable ſpeculation.

Ditt. My conſcience——

Count. (*with indifference*) Fine principles.

Bold. To be ſure; but the ſhipwrecked catch at the firſt plank, were even a father or dear friend already clinging to it.

Ditt. Generous friends might ſave me—

Bold. Generous friends, *mon ami*, are not always rich friends.

Ditt. My firſt thought was the noble Counteſs.

Count. Vous rendez juſtice à mes ſentiments.

Ditt. My ſecond, you dear Baron.

Bold. Vous me touchez mon cher.

Ditt. The advancing of one thouſand louis d'ors would perhaps be ſufficient.

Count. One thouſand louis d'ors! ay, ay!

Ditt. So much thought I, have I loſt here within a few weeks, and there will be no heſitation in advancing me this ſum.

Count. 'Tis pity, Baron, that I was juſt obliged to buy that dear ſet of pearls.

Bold. And that juſt now the damned jew ſhould have preſſed a draft upon me, which I was obliged to pay; *O mon ami!* had you but one hour ſooner—

Ditt. I only this inſtant received the ſhocking news; there, read it yourſelf.

[*Gives him his own letter, and obſerves him ſmiling—Boldenſtern perceives it to be his own writing, much confuſed tries to conceal his embarraſſment; aſſumes an air but can't ſucceed; ſtands like a criminal—Ditthelm burſts out laughing, and laughing goes off.*

SCENE XI.

COUNTESS, *Baron* BOLDENSTERN.

Count. What does that mean? *Boldenſtern preſents her the letter*) *Mon dieu!* That is the ſame letter.

Bold. The very ſame.

Count. How came that into his hands?

Bold. Do I know that?

Count. Curſe! *On ſe moque de nous.*

Bold. Le coup eſt ſanglant.

Counteſs. Can you gueſs whom we have to thank for this curſed trick?

Bold. Who elſe but the handſome Sylvia, at whoſe feet we beheld the Damon.

Count. Quite right; the letter remained on my toilet *(ſhe rings the bell violently, and calls)* Sophia! Sophia!

Enter SOPHIA.

Sophia. What are your commands?

Count. You are an impertinent, good for nothing—this inſtant leave my houſe. [*Exit in a paſſion.*

Sophia. In what have I offended?

Bold. My dear child! you have made a ſtupid blunder; to warn fools is a miſerable profeſſion; one ſeldom reforms them, and, moreover never gets thanks.

Sophia. I don't underſtand you.

Bold. O yes, you do underſtand me; however, I have compaſſion on your youth; the Counteſs is a much reſpected lady; whoever quits her ſervice, in ſuch a manner, will not eaſily find ſuch another ſituation; but ſhould every kindneſs be ſhewn towards me, a generous protector will be found. I have a niece who is in want of a maid; a little more docility, and all may yet turn out well.

[*Gives her a pinch on her cheek and exit.*

SCENE XIII.

Sophia. (alone) Miſerable being!—God be thanked, that all this is come to paſs. I ſhall aſſiſt my mother in working; I ſhall no longer be forced to ſerve beings whom I deſpiſe—away, away from this houſe! with a lighter heart, and relieved conſcience! Ah! but one thing I regret, that Dirthelm ſhould have betrayed me! [*Exit.*

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

ACT III. *SCENE I.*

A darkened Room, furniſhed with ſeveral Implements, in a manner magically. In the Centre of the Stage an Altar, over which move thick Clouds of Smoke.

HADEBRATH *alone.*

Hade. (is buſy in putting every thing in order) Hem! Why do I tremble? The die is caſt. O good God! only bread for my poor children! (*goes to a door concealed by tapeſtry, opens it and calls*) Are you dreſſed?

Enſign Erlen. (*within*) Yes!

Hade. (*ſhuts the door carefully, and throws more frankincenſe into the cenſer*) Now then! (*goes towards the middle door, about to open it, turns back again and leans with his hand before his forehead on the altar*) Is it the ſmoke that torments me ſo? Or is it conſcience? Courage! courage! recede I cannot! (*recovers himſelf, opens the middle door, and with a ſolemn voice*) Young man, ſtep forwards!

SCENE II.

Ditt. (*fumbling out of the door*) Why ſo dark, my father?

Hade. Give me thy hand! tremble not, ſhew purity of heart, and thy inward light will be increaſed.

Ditt. Whither doſt thou lead me?

Hade. Follow me full of comfort; have confidence; ſpirits wander about thee; be worthy of their communion.

Ditt. An irreſiſtible terror—

Hade. Step into this circle, recover thyſelf, ſhut thy eyes, commune with thy ſoul, baniſh the leaſt deſire of inquiſitiveneſs, or elſe, danger threatens thee (*leaves him ſtanding, and kneels at the altar.*)

Ditt. (*feels the effect of the ſmoke*) What ails me? My ſenſes are blunted—my head is heavy—I feel intoxicated.

Hade. (*with his hands folded*) Thou, whom I dare not name, look into the heart of this youth; it is devoted to virtue; then give me to underſtand that I am near. (*A flame blazes upon the altar, by which the room receives a weak light.*)

Ditt. Ha! (*looks timorouſly about*).

Hade. (*after a pauſe*) Thou, whom I now dare name, Ariel! Ariel! become viſible to my eyes! appear to me in a friendly ſhape—(*pauſe, he jumps up, ſtarts back, looks ſtaringly aſide, and with a commanding tone of voice*) Youth! youth! do not move out of the circle!

Ditt. (*trembling, looks towards the ſame ſpot, where Hadebrath's eyes are fixed*) I ſee nothing, my father.

Hade. Be quiet. Ariel! the friend longeth after a friend; united ſouls, worthy thy protection, enflamed with equal paſſion, aſk thy aſſiſtance. Wave over the ſeas, which like drops of dew glitter under thy wings! veil Blunt's ghoſt in ether, and return with my requeſt—(*pauſe*) Youth! the moment approaches, draws me near thee into the ſame circle (*reaches his hand to Ditthelm, and ſteps into the circle, pauſe, Ditthelm ſhrinks up to him.*)—(*Hadebrath inſpired*) Annihilated is the ſpace, the time vaniſheth! Ariel flew and found him weeping; then did he rock him into a ſoft dreamleſs ſlumber and drew

the ghoſt out of a weeping veil, like vapour from a bedewed roſe. *(raiſes his voice)* Blunt! Blunt! I call thee! *(a loud crack is heard; the flame upon the altar blazes on high—pauſe—Ditthelm is in anxious expectation)* The friend's voice penetrates into graves, ſounds over the main, draws down the allied ghoſts from the far diſtant planets. Blunt! Blunt I call thee! *(pauſe—at a diſtance, the ſound of an Harmonica is heard)* Triumph! he is near us! that divine liſping announces a friendly appearance—wave hither, unfettered ghoſt! become viſible in a flaſh of light, anſt appeaſe the eyes of thy longing friend! Blunt! Blunt! I call the for thee third time. *(The Harmonica is heard nearer)* Now, thou art near thy aim; throw thy arms around me, and fix thy eyes upon yonder wall.

SCENE III.

The ſecret tapeſtry Door ſprings open; a thick cloud of ſmoke iſſues forth; in the Cloud ſtands ERLEN *immovable, wrapt up in a Great-coat.*

Ditt. *(crying aloud)* It is he! it is my friend!

Erlen. *(with a firm voice)* Yes, I am your friend; but not Blunt!

Hade. *(ſurpriſed)* What means that?

Erl. Young man! you are in the hands of an impoſtor he has hired me to cheat you *[Throws off his dreſs.*

Ditt. Ha! were it poſſible! *(In a paſſion puſhes Hadebrath off)* Fellow! haſt thou made a fool of me, and like a blockhead bewitched me in the magic circle?

Hade. *(aſhamed, ſteps aſide, beats his forehead, and in a ſorrowful voice calls)* O God!

Erl. I undertook the part, as a warning to you, truſt not, therefore, in future, thoſe men who appear myſterious and ſupernatural. They are either fools or deceivers. This fellow meant to rob you firſt of your ſenſes, and afterwards of your money. Farewell! *[Going.*

Ditt. Who are you, generous ſtranger?

Erl. My name has nothing to do with it. I am an honeſt man, and have done my duty. *[Exit in haſte.*

SCENE IV.

DITTHELM. HADEBRATH.

Ditt. *(Walks ſeveral times up and down in great emotion; then, with his arms folded, ſteps before the dejected Hadebrath, and looks at*

him ſcornfully) Now my reverend father, it appears as if you yourſelf had ſeen an apparition.

Hade. Mr. Ditthelm, I am in your power.

Ditt. Certainly! and in order to prevent you from hatching any further miſchief, ſhall ſend you immediately to priſon.

Hade. Before you do that, have the goodneſs to open that door.

Ditt. Wherefore?—Probably another ghoſt concealed?

Hade. Three ſmall children upon ſtraw; two of which are ill.

Ditt. What does that mean?

Hade. Mr. Ditthelm; for mercy's ſake, liſten to my ſtory—I was an honeſt tradeſman, by profeſſion a carpenter, in which I have carried on a great deal of buſineſs and gained reputation; but when in the height of repute, I met with unforſeen misfortunes, which, however induſtrious in buſineſs, will happen. I was forced to call in my debts, to ſatisfy my creditors; it gave offence to many of my cuſtomers; my intreaties for a continuance of their favour rejected, I fell into deſpair; my good dear wife added to my grief. Her father being a machiniſt, furniſhed us with a puppet ſhow, by which we gained a good livelyhood; my dear Margaret's lively diſpoſition, her humour and the pleaſing manner in which ſhe performed, brought numbers of ſpectators to our little Theatre. Five weeks ago, do you remember Mr. Ditthelm, when you in a frolick, perhaps of drunkenneſs, aſſiſted in breaking and deſtroying the poor figures that were the only ſupport of an unfortunate tradeſman.

Ditt. How? Was that you? (*confuſed and aſhamed.*)

Hade. That was I. Five weeks ago, my poor wife died in childbed. On the morning ſhe died, the performance from the hiſtory of Holifernes was advertiſed for that evening, my children whining for bread; thus, with a contrite and broken heart, I was compelled to ſtep behind the curtain. You, in company with ſeveral others, apparently having juſt left the ſons of Bacchus, came to the performance, which, to be ſure was very bad. Harlequin ſhould play his fooleries—the corpſe laid in the next room—the children of Iſrael jubilate—my new born child whined without nouriſhment, and when, at laſt, I came to act the part of Judith, which my wife uſed to perform; when I recollected, that a few evenings before ſhe ſtood by my ſide to manage the wire—then did I try in vain to repeat her jeſts; they ſtuck in my throat, tears guſhed from my eyes—it occaſioned a long pauſe—the company became impatient—I tried to go on, but my attempts were in vain—the audience not being acquainted with my ſituation, began to be diſſatisfied. I dare ſay, you, Mr. Ditthelm, remember how all was broken to pieces.

Ditt. (*much moved*) Why did you not come the next morning to me?

Hade. I did; but your ſervant refuſed me admittance.

Ditt. That Shark.

Hade. I then went to ſome of thoſe gentlemen who were in your company; but there I was received much worſe—they called me a cheat, which at that time, by God I was not. When I came home, I found my poor children ſucking the paint from the broken puppets. Thus diſtreſſed, I for the firſt time in my life forgot myſelf. Knowing you to be a young, good-hearted, and credulous gentleman, with the aſſiſtance of my father in law, I procured this apparatus, and in diſguiſe appeared before you. In my own ſhape I watched all your ſteps: my boldneſs ſoon proved ſucceſsful. I deceived you, although my conſcience reproached me: yet when I heard that you were rich, given to gambling, loſt great ſums—Ah! only as much of it were my thoughts as I ſhould want to ſet me up again in buſineſs. Then will God and my own diligence aſſiſt me—then ſhall I, perhaps, be enabled to repay him one day or other when he himſelf is in need of money—At preſent he does not want it.

Ditt. Is all that true?

Hade. You are right to miſtruſt me. Here is your money. I have taken but little from it, and from that little I have paid the doctor who attends my poor ſick children.

Ditt. Man—what do you take me for? I have broken your puppets; I am willing to repair your loſs. Reſume, in the name of God, your buſineſs. I will advance you any ſum that is required.

Hade. (*burſts into tears, and kneels down before him*) O Mr. Ditthelm——

Ditt. (*Prevents him*) Not ſo, my friend; do not put me to the bluſh—get for your children what they are in want of, look out for a good mother, and for the reſt I will take care.

Hade. (*Quite overcome*) Children, children!—(*takes him by the hand, and draws him nearer*)—Mr. Ditthelm, come, pray do come and behold——

Ditt. What do you mean?

Hade. (*opens the door*) Children! here is your ſaviour, your father—(*both go in*).

SCENE V.

Madame LUPPNITZ's *Room*—EMILY *at her Toilette*—*Madame* LUPPNITZ *aſſiſts* EMILY *in finiſhing her Head-dreſs.*

Emily. Very pretty, indeed! Am I not handſome, mamma?

Mad. Lup. Admirably ſo! white and ſky-blue, what can be more

becoming? And this corn-flower in your black hair—ſo lovely—ſo ſurprizng——

Emily. Brilliants would be ſtill better.

Mad. Lup. The magic wand of beauty will ſoon transform theſe corn-flowers into brilliants. So! now you are ready. O girl! girl! I am almoſt like Pygmalion, I am in love with my own ſtatue.

Emily. Dear me, mamma—ſure I am no ſtatue.

Mad. Lup. Alas! not much more. Yet what need for more? There are ſtill many Pygmalions in the world that would rejoice if their ſtatues ſhould animate me—To be ſure, Ditthelm has more intellect than he need have with his great fortune; it would, therefore, be right that you ſhould beſtow a little more time in beautifying yourſelf.

Emily. Don't I dreſs myſelf with taſte?

Mad. Lup. Were you to take more pains in writing——

Emily. Have I not, mamma? It was but yeſterday that I wrote a copy from the preſcription of the fine hard Pomatum.

Mad. Lup. Were you to read more diligently——

Emily. Have I not read the whole book of the Twelve Virgins that ſlept ſo long, and yet remained young and handſome?

Mad. Lup. (*pointing upon the table*) There lie ſtill the *Liaiſons Dangereuſes*—they muſt be taken away. He is at times inclined to moralize; I have, therefore, brought you two other books from the circulating library.

Emily. Romances——

Mad. Lup. No—on love and matrimony—"Roſalien's Letters of Madame la Roche," and "The mode by which a young woman may render herſelf worthy of Eſteem."

Emily. I don't like to read them.

Mad. Lup. But they ſhall lie here upon the table, that it may ſeem as if you read them.

Emily. And wherefore?

Mad. Lup. Child, you don't know what great effect ſuch trifles have on men's humours. Here is likewiſe a letter of thanks from a poor widow who received from you a ſecret charity.

Emily. From me?

Mad. Lup. Yes, yes—it muſt be left half open, as if it had been thrown careleſsly on the table: he may, perhaps, take notice of it.

Emily. But I don't know of a ſecret charity.

Mad. Lup. That does not ſignify—a woman need not be all that ſhe appears to be.

Emily. Muſt I alſo ſeem to love him?

Mad. Lup. Certainly.

Emily. But I don't love him.

Mad. Lup. Neither does that matter: you will be a rich wife, and that is ſufficient.

Emily. But why talk the romances ſo much of love ?

Mad. Lup. Becauſe they are romances. Domeſtic happineſs, my child, muſt reſt on ſilver pillows—one can always adorn the building afterwards, that no one may even ſuſpect it was merely built on money ; —one may, when one is rich, now and then drop a word of deſpiſing riches, juſt as one does with a warm morning-gown, which before ſtrange company of courſe is hid, yet one feels the moſt comfortable in it.

Emily. And love——

Mad. Lup. Love, my child, love is a good thing: he that buys a houſe, to be ſure will like it better if a fine garden belongs to it, though he does not buy it for the ſake of the garden ; for in the winter one don't liſten to nightingales. When love is ſtrong—O ! then it is contented ; but in time it looks for conveniences, like every thing that grows old ; and when it does not find theſe, it goes a houſe farther to a rich neighbour ; therefore venture every thing to fetter him. Thy own and thy mother's fortune depend on it. I have often had pleaſing dreams, that thy charms would bring me a rich ſon-in-law.—O may theſe dreams come to paſs !

Emily. Shall we look into the book of interpretations?

Mad. Lup. (*With enthuſiaſm*) a rich ſon-in-law ! you don't know into what ſea of ecſtacy this idea carries a mother's heart. Even thoſe who are called ſenſible mothers and wives, and appear to the world with unfettered and oſtentatious ſpirits, ſteer yet always in ſilence the veſſel of their wiſhes towards this harbour of Eldorado, and trouble themſelves little about the uſeleſs ballaſt, amorous fancies, with which their daughters uſed to freight the veſſel.—Enough, Emily ! I hear ſome one coming up ſtairs. You know your leſſon. If it be the Enſign, receive him as your brother—(*goes into the next room*).

Emily. (*alone*) Eldorado ! that is the country where the pebble-ſtones are brilliants. Ah ! why was I not born at Eldorado ?

SCENE VI.

Enſign ERLEN, EMILY.

Enſign Erlen. Pardon me, Miſs. Do I come at the proper time to Madame Luppnitz ?

Emily. (*With a courteſy*) O yes.

Erl. And to you alſo, Miſs Luppnitz ?

Emily. (*Courteſies again*) O yes.

Erl. Then I am glad of the honour——

Emily. (*Quickly interrupting him with a low courteſy*) The honour is on my ſide.

Erl. (*With a ſmile, views her from head to foot—a long pauſe, in which both look at each other*) We have fine weather to day.

Emily. O yes—(*again a pauſe; at laſt Emily blunders out*)—Were you at the play laſt night?

Erl. No.

Emily. It was very full, and very faſhionably attended.

Erl. And the play—

Emily. Ah! the play was a tragedy; but I could almoſt have laughed.

Erl. Laughed?

Emily. At a prince that was always calling my name.

Erl. What name?

Emily. Emily.

Erl. Moſt likely, Emily Galloti.

Emily. The piece is of one Leſſing.

Erl. (*half to himſelf*) One Leſſing? O Apollo! O Muſes!

Emily. My poor name-ſake wanted to marry.

Erl. That you want likewiſe.

Emily. Hem!—properly my mamma.

Erl. And, perhaps, againſt your inclination.

Emily. Fie, Sir! I have no inclination.

Erl. Poor child!

Emily. Yes—I am a poor child; therefore I am obliged to marry a rich huſband.

Erl. And I am to repreſent your brother.

Emily. That I am very glad of.

Erl. But if all ſhould come to nothing?

Emily. Mamma is ingenious. Ah! you don't know mamma's well exerciſed wit carries every thing.

Erl. Does Mr. Ditthelm love you?

Emily. He tells me ſo at times.

Erl. And do you love him?

Emily. Mamma has taught me that the rich are always amiable.

Erl. To be ſure.

Emily. I ſhall get brilliants!

Erl. So!—then your fortune is made.

SCENE VII.

Enter Madame LUPPNITZ.

Mad. Lup. Welcome, Mr. Erlen—you are as good as your word. Ditthelm will be here preſently. I have already ſeen him from the

balcony: in the mean time pleaſe to follow me to receive a few more hints. You, Emily, be diſcreet and remember my motherly advice.—*(Goes with Erlen into the next room)*

SCENE VIII.

Emily. (alone) Aye, this young officer I like better than Ditthelm. Mamma wants to make him my brother—why not my huſband? But Ditthelm is rich, and will preſent me with brilliants, ear-rings, necklace—*(with childiſh joy)*—O! how I ſhall then drive about in my carriage!—the people on all ſides will whiſper, Who is that handſome lady ſo richly dreſſed?—*(claps her hands)*—Ah! how happy I ſhall be!

SCENE IX.

Enter DITTHELM.

Ditt. I am happy to find you here, my charming Emily.

Emily. I am pleaſed that you are come, my charming Mr. Ditthelm.

Ditt. I ſtand in need of diſſipation, and will to-day tell you very often that I love, adore you, and ſo forth.

Emily. And ſo forth? What does that mean?

Ditt. Aye, aye, my dear, that means—the queſtion is yet a fooliſh one.

Emily. Have I, perhaps, been awkward?

Ditt. All the ſame. As long as thoſe roſes upon your lips, and thoſe violets blow in your eyes, you have no occaſion for magic power. I had rather ſee this animated form than the famous Madame Medicis.

Emily. Who is this Madame Medicis? I don't know her.

Ditt. A handſome woman, but cold and dumb.

Emily. Dumb!—the poor creature!

Ditt. Yet ſhe poſſeſſes great advantages—ſhe don't grow old.

Emily. Aye! then one would almoſt wiſh to become dumb.

Ditt. Obſerve, that the inſtinct of her ſex is not even denied her. Surely, dear child, you are, with your dumb ſimplicity, more entertaining than mamma with her ſerpent's judiciouſneſs—

[*Takes her by the hand.*

Emily. Don't come too near me.

Ditt. Why not?

Emily. I ſhall cry out.

Ditt. Fie!—have you learned that from thoſe books?—(*he points at the table, goes and opens a book*)—"The Mode by which a young Woman may render herſelf worthy of Eſteem." Bravo! that is a good book.

Emily. And very finely bound—is it not?

Ditt. Have you read it?

Emily. O yes.

Ditt. Does the preface pleaſe you?

Emily. Very much.

Ditt. But it has no preface.

Emily. (*confuſedly*) That—even that pleaſes me.

Ditt. Ha, ha, ha!—in fact, handſome Emily, you have a moſt lovely mouth, but only formed for kiſſing. Well then accompliſh its deſtination—(*kiſſes her*).

Emily. Mr. Ditthelm, I will cry out.

Ditt. In earneſt?

Emily. Whether jeſt or earneſt, I ſhall cry out.

Ditt. Aye, upon that I will venture.

Emily. Have a care—my brother will come.

Ditt. Your brother? How long have you had a brother?

Emily. Since this morning.

Ditt. Very well! I ſhall be glad to be acquainted with him; and if he is as agreeable as his ſiſter, he will not object to my giving her a kiſs. (*He kiſſes her by force; ſhe ſcreams*).

SCENE X.

Enter Madame LUPPNITZ.

Mad. Lup. So, Sir!—is that right, Sir, to take advantage of a mother's abſence, and thus lay ſnares for an innocent girl?

Ditt. Your moſt obedient humble ſervant.

Mad. Lup. I have always taken you to be a fine, well-bred young gentleman.

Ditt. Aye, that I am.

Mad. Lup. To whom I might give free acceſs without fearing danger.

Ditt. (*in a gallant manner*) Madame, permit me to kiſs your hand.

Mad. Lup. I am not inclined to liſten to the kiſſing of hands. You have injured the reputation of my poor child——yes, that you have.

Ditt. Faith, mother, to ſpeak truth, I verily believe ſhe never had any yet.

"The Mode by which a young Woman may render herſelf worthy of Eſteem." What do you think, Madam?—the contraſt is curious.

Mad. Lup. (*trying to recover herſelf, but in vain*) Mr. Ditthelm—

Ditt. O mother, mother! be aſhamed of ſuch tricks with which you ſeek prey for your daughter. Form your pretty goſling to become a good domeſtic wife, and you will ſoon find a huſband for her—(*Madame Luppnitz likewiſe faints away.*)

Ditt. What, both?—Ha, ha, ha—a good joke, indeed, where an anſwer is required. Well, well, you may both remain in this enticing poſition as long as you pleaſe: however, it is but fair to recompenſe my fright—(*kiſſes Emily*)—She don't wake—(*kiſſes her again*)—Ah! ſhe is dead! [*Exit laughing.*

Mad. Lup. (*opens her eyes and looks after him*) The ſon-in-law is gone.

Emily. (*in the ſame manner*) And my brilliants—(*looking pitifully at each other*).

SCENE XIII.

A Room in Old ERLEN'S *Houſe, in which, beſides other Furniture there is a Writing-Deſk.*

Mr. Erlen. (*Steps into the room with a letter in his hand*) A letter from Eckſtad, that will decide—(*anxiouſly views it*)—Should my creditors perſiſt in deſtraining moveables—Ah! the ſum is ſo ſmall—but he is rich, and therefore hard. I am prepared for the worſt—(*opens the letter*)—"I am ſorry to inform you,"—Ah! that I conjectured——(*walks once up and down, then reads again*)—"I am ſorry to imform you, that all your entreaties have proved fruitleſs. This moment I have received orders to ſeize your goods. I haſten, good man, to give you notice, that you might not feel the blow without being prepared." I thank thee good Eckſtad. "In half an hour's time I ſhall be with you." (*After a pauſe*)———Well! then come and take all—my wife, my children, and my heart you cannot take from me——(*throws himſelf into an arm-chair, and hides his head in his arm.*)

SCENE XIV.

Enter. Mrs. ERLEN.

Mrs. Erlen. (*when ſhe ſees him in that poſture*) What is the matter, dear man?———(*Mr. Erlen turns himſelf towards her, and holds out his hand to her*)—Good God! what ails, what affects you?

Mr. Erlen. I was juſt conſidering what you would do ſhould I one day or other fall ill.

Mrs. Erlen. How came this into your thoughts? I hope you are not ill.

Mr. Erlen. No—but I am growing old—ſurely that thought torments me. How would you maintain me?—how bear up——

Mrs. Erlen. Have you not a wife—have you not children?

Mr. Erlen. Very well; but the doctor—the medicine—your own wants—while I earn nothing.

Mrs. Erlen. Unkind man! why do you torment me thus?

Mr. Erlen. Speak!—what would you do?

Mrs. Erlen. I would ſell all, except thy bed and a chair, on which I would ſit by thy bed-ſide.

Mr. Erlen. And ſleep yourſelf on ſtraw?

Mrs. Erlen. Why not? It is the bed on which thouſands reſt.

Mr. Erlen. And were I to get well again—

Mrs. Erlen. Then ſhould I think myſelf amply rewarded for the little trouble.

Mr. Erlen. And ſhould we have nothing—nothing at all left?

Mrs. Erlen. Then we ſhould reſume our uſual work; and when, after a few months, we had earned ſufficient to buy the firſt pillow, O how ſoftly ſhould we reſt.

Mr. Erlen. *(embraces her)* My faithful, my good wife, we have nothing left; theſe goods are no longer ours.

Mrs. Erlen. *(ſtarts)* Dear huſband you ſpeak that with a tone—

Mr. Erlen. Yet not with a tone of deſpair; I am well, and as yet can work.

Mrs. Erlen. Has any thing happened?

Mr. Erlen. This very night we ſleep upon ſtraw.

Mrs. Erlen. *(much diſturbed, but conceals it)* Speak more explicitly, you know me.

Mr. Erlen. Bruckmann has commenced an action againſt me.

Mrs. Erlen. I knew that before.

Mr. Erlen. I cannot pay.

Mrs. Erlen. But you had hopes——

Mr. Erlen. I had; I built them upon the humanity of a rich man; that means I built upon the ſand.

Mrs. Erlen. He will not wait?

Mr. Erlen. To day he will ſeize upon our goods.

Mrs. Erlen. *(much alarmed)* This very day?

Mr. Erlen. I expect the police officer every moment.

Mrs. Erlen. *(in great agitation, but recovers herſelf by force)* Well, well, in the name of God, I now thank you for the ſad introduction to this diſcloſure—*(abſorbs her tears)*—it would have been

much worſe had I been obliged to ſell all to nurſe a dearly beloved huſband.

Mr. Erlen. Thus I expected to find you—*(much moved, embraces her)* and thus I do find you.

Mrs. Erlen. Nay, we do not belong to thoſe who place their hands quietly in their laps and ſay, God ſurely will aſſiſt; for the firſt day proviſion is made.

Mr. Erlen. No, Wilhelmina, we have done what we could, have been diligent and frugal; we now dare fold our hands, and pray with confidence: God ſurely will aſſiſt.

Mrs. Erlen. For the firſt day proviſion is made. You go to our Charles, I to Sophia.

Mr. Erlen. And would you part with me? my comfort, my only ſupport? When God caſt poverty into the ſcale of my life, he threw into the other the bliſs of matrimony, and that ſcale ſunk; we therefore ſhall not part.

Mrs. Erlen. (on his neck) No, we will not part!

Mr. Erlen. If you alone remain with me, then is my houſe not empty. Happineſs and bliſs do not conſiſt in chairs and tables. If I ſee only you about me, you mild ſufferer! O then have I ſpirit and ſtrength! without you I can neither pray nor work.

Mrs. Erlen. We will not part, we will ſleep on ſtraw.

Mr. Erlen. (hearing ſomebody approaching, winds himſelf from her arms).

SCENE XV.

Enter the Officer of the Police, and two Bailiffs.

Eckſtad. (to the men) Wait in the room till I call for you.—*(goes up to Mr. and Mrs. Erlen, greets them civilly)*—believe me, dear Mr. Erlen, that during the thirteen years I have been in office, I never executed my duty unwillingly till to-day.

Mr. Erlen. My heart thanks you.

Eckſtad. You know my ſituation, a number of children, and ſlender means of ſupport. I ſhould wiſh to aſſiſt were I able.

Mr. Erl. To ſhew ſincere compaſſion is alſo benefaction: do your duty, you ſee we are prepared.

Eckſtad. I am glad to find you ſo. I admire your fortitude, and could almoſt call you happier than the rigorous man in whoſe name I now appear.

Mr. Erlen. O ſurely! we are happier!

Mrs. *Erlen.* Here are the keys to all which theſe apartments contain.

Eckſtad. You will have the goodneſs to point out to me what is perhaps your perſonal property.

Mrs. *Erlen.* Perſonal property? nothing Sir!

Echſtad. Your dowry in furniture, plate, linen, &c. &c.

Mrs. *Erlen.* I was but a poor girl, and brought nothing to my huſband except my heart.

Eckſtad. Perhaps preſents from your friends and relations.

Mrs. *Erlen.* What was mine is his alſo.

Eckſtad. You never ſigned your name to your huſband's bonds.

Mrs. *Erlen.* Then will I do it yet.

Eckſtad. Conſider you are both old, deprived of every convenience.

Mrs. *Erlen.* Under what title ſhould we keep any thing back? preſents of a man that we deſpiſe? or the gain of a known fraud?

Eckſtad. Really, madam! you make my duty burthenſome in an extraordinary degree.

Mr. *Erlen.* But confeſs alſo Mr. Eckſtad, you are rewarded. It is only in ſuch ſituations one gets acquainted with mankind; what a wife have you become acquainted with to-day?

Eckſtad. (moved) I perceive that you are richer than the world ſuppoſes. Well then, let us make a beginning; is this writing-deſk open?—(Mr. *Erlen opens it).*

Eckſtad. Will you not take out your papers?

Mr. *Erlen. (while he takes out the papers)* You muſt know that of all that I poſſeſs, the loſs of this writing-deſk grieves me moſt.

Eckſtad. One gets accuſtomed to a favourite piece of furniture.

Mr. *Erlen.* It is not that; that writing-deſk belonging formerly to my old friend Ditthelm; he ſat before it when I ſaw him for the laſt time before his death. I wiſhed to keep ſomething for his ſake, and this writing-deſk was given to me.

Eckſtad. That was but little indeed, conſidering the great loſs you at that time ſuſtained.

Mr. Erlen. God, and my own conſcience, are convinced of the truth.

Eckſtad. And every honeſt man that knows you.

Mr. *Erlen.* It is empty; here is the key.

Eckſtad. (examines the writing-deſk) Hem! hem; Is there no ſecret drawer belonging to it?

Mr. *Erlen.* Not that I know of.

Eckſtad. It ſeems to me as if there were—here about—I have one myſelf which reſembles this—ah! here might be a ſecret ſpring.

Mr. *Erlen.* That may be; it never entered into my mind to [illegible] mine it.

Eckſtad. (*after trying in ſeveral places, he preſſes open a ſpri[ng] had concealed a ſecret drawer*) Look here—to be ſure! qui[te] and full of papers.

Mr. Erlen. (*ſurprized*) they do not belong to me.

Eckſtad. Ay, ay, here's money in abundance! look here—[a] parcel of bank notes.

Mr. Erlen. (*looks at it*) Gracious God! that is my mone[y]

Eckſtad. Is it poſſible?

Mr. Erlen. Thoſe are my ſeven thouſand dollars!

Mrs. Erlen. God! thou wert near us, in the hour of ad[-]

Mr. Erlen. Mr. Eckſtad, that is the ſame money wi[th] to old Ditthelm the evening before he died.

Mr. Eckſtad. I underſtand. Now all is cleared up: had put up his friend's money ſafe enough.

Mrs. Erlen. He was juſt employed at the time, and put it out of his hand.

Eckſtad. It is clear. Ay, ay! and I am ſo for[-] has choſen me for the inſtrument. Mr. Erlen, I wiſh yo[u] my heart, and return home with pleaſure.

Mr. Erlen. Stop, Mr. Eckſtad, dare I make uſe of t[he]

Eckſtad. Why not? It is your own: enough tha[t] ſo long lain dead.

Mr. Erlen. Have I not juſt now explained, that t[he] this writing deſk contained do not belong to me.

Eckſtad. They do belong to you.

Mr. Erlen. When the guardians of young Di[t] preſent of the writing deſk, did they know of [its]

Eckſtad. Perhaps not.

Mr. Erlen. And if they had known them?

Eckſtad. They were honeſt men; and would have returned the money.

Mr. Erlen. Yet not without proper enquiry.

Eckſtad. What of enquiry? the caſe is [ſo] Does Ditthelm miſs this ſum? does he complai[n] find bonds are deficient in his books? Nay, [he] ſay—to whom, therefore, can belong the mo[ney]

Mr. Erlen. All true—but the queſtion is [not] which, if ſecret, remained in the deſk of a [dead] I am no.

Eckſtad. Under other circumſtances, ſurely

Mr. Erlen. Dare I judge in this caſe?

Eckſtad. Dear, wonderous man!

Mr. Erlen. Dare I keep ſilent? Might [there] drawer beſides the money?

I am on ſhore.

you, and a female genius ſtretches forth her
rman, now will I marry.

what happineſs does not conſiſt.
is ſomething.
e where to look for it.
it but half.
ear the marvellous hiſtory of this day; an extraor-
s, a collection of good and bad (*a knock at the*
mate! we are interrupted—that juſt now—

SCENE II.

Enter Mr. ERLEN.

Mr. Erlen, an unexpected viſit.
(after a bow) A houſe in which one has paſſed happy
m likes to enter when the old acquaintance no longer lives

heir to my father, I might hope that he had alſo left me
of claiming your friendſhip.
. I am old, Mr. Ditthelm; youth and age are as little
other as the bird and the oyſter; but I eſteem you as the
d friend, whom I have often carried upon my arms, and
y uſed to crawl to my pocket, becauſe it was a magazine
s for him. To-day I have brought you ſomething, doubt-
it will give you as much pleaſure as a peace of ſweatmeat
times *(feels in his pockets)*—it is money.
Money!—You! to me? (*aſide*)—ſhould Sophia have re-

rlen. You may, perhaps, remember, from hear ſay, that on the
father died I brought a ſum of money, which after his death,
where be found.
To my great ſorrow.
Erlen. A very ſingular accident has occured.—Accident!—
give me! it was the work of thy Providence. I received at
as a keep-ſake, your father's writing-deſk; (*to Herrman*)
bly remember the circumſtance.
Perfectly.
Erlen. In this writing-deſk, by mere chance, a ſecret drawer
very day diſcovered: it contained ſeven thouſand dollars,
conformable to my duty, I deliver up to you.

news; *(takes his hat and ſtick, and embraces her)* farewell, dear Wilhelmina!

Mrs. Erlen. God be with you!

Mr. Erlen. We ſhall not ſleep this night on ſtraw. [*Exit.*

Mrs. Erlen. (*looks after him with her hands folded*) God be with him!

END OF THE THIRD ACT.

ACT IV. *SCENE I.*

Ditthelm's Room—DITTHELM. HERRMAN.

Ditt. (ſitting in an arm-chair, extravagantly laughing.)

Herr. (ſteps into the room) Have you ſent for me?

Ditt. Ha! ha! ha!

Herr. May I laugh with you?

Ditt. O yes: dear Herrman, wiſh me joy.

Herr. Of what?

Ditt. I am plundered.

Herr. A curious joy!

Ditt. My drawers, my boxes, all entirely emptied.

Herr. By whom?——

Ditt. By whom elſe than my ingenious Flink! linen and clothes, laces and rings, all he has packed up. I have nothing but this coat and this ſhirt.

Herr. One ſhould purſue him.

Ditt. No, no; this is a day of warning to me; I have learned a great deal to-day. Flink was likewiſe one of my profeſſors: he be thanked, and may he enjoy his plunder.

Herr. But the loſs is conſiderable.

Ditt. Much leſs than my gain: how can thoſe loſt articles be compared to one ſingle leſſon of prudence? Gameſters, apparitions, avaricious mothers, coquetting daughters, roguiſh ſervants, all diſcovered on this day:—wiſh me joy, Herrman.

Herr. With all my heart.

Ditt. I am free again; every ſtring is torn that entwined me.

Herr. God grant it!

Ditt. This day I have learned, that the path of youth reſembles an inſecure bridge; if Providence does not guide him over, he will fall into the ſtream.

Herr. Very true.

Ditt. God be thanked! I am on ſhore.

Herr. Surely.

Ditt. On ſhore, I tell you, and a female genius ſtretches forth her tender hand. Yes, Herrman, now will I marry.

Herr. So ſuddenly?

Ditt. I now know in what happineſs does not conſiſt.

Herr. That ſurely is ſomething.

Ditt. And am ſenſible where to look for it.

Herr. I underſtand it but half.

Ditt. Hear me, hear the marvellous hiſtory of this day; an extraordinary chain of events, a collection of good and bad (*a knock at the door*)—how unfortunate! we are interrupted—that juſt now—

SCENE II.

Enter Mr. ERLEN.

Herr. Ah! Mr. Erlen, an unexpected viſit.

Mr. Erlen. (*after a bow*) A houſe in which one has paſſed happy days, one ſeldom likes to enter when the old acquaintance no longer lives in it.

Ditt. As heir to my father, I might hope that he had alſo left me the privilege of claiming your friendſhip.

Mr. Erlen. I am old, Mr. Ditthelm; youth and age are as little ſuited to each other as the bird and the oyſter; but I eſteem you as the ſon of my old friend, whom I have often carried upon my arms, and who ſo gladly uſed to crawl to my pocket, becauſe it was a magazine of ſweatmeats for him. To-day I have brought you ſomething, doubting whether it will give you as much pleaſure as a peace of ſweatmeat did at thoſe times (*feels in his pockets*)—it is money.

Ditt. Money!—You! to me? (*aſide*)—ſhould Sophia ha[illegible] re[illegible] revealed.——

Mrs. Erlen. You may, perhaps, remember, from hear ſay, that on the day your father died I brought a ſum of money, which after his death, could no where be found.

Ditt. To my great ſorrow.

Mr. Erlen. A very ſingular accident has occured.—Accident!—God forgive me! it was the work of thy Providence. I received at that time, as a keep-ſake, your father's writing-deſk; (*to Herrman*) you probably remember the circumſtance.

Herr. Perfectly.

Mr. Erlen. In this writing-deſk, by mere chance, a ſecret drawer was this very day diſcovered: it contained ſeven thouſand dollars, which, conformable to my duty, I deliver up to you.

Ditt. How, Mr. Erlen? to me! why to me?

Mr. Erlen. Becauſe the writing-deſk belonged to you, and becauſe your guardians were unacquainted with the treaſure it contained.

Ditt. Seven thouſand dollars only—juſt the amount of the ſum which you entruſted to my father.

Mr. Erlen. Really ſo.

Ditt. It muſt then of courſe be your own money.

Herr. Without the leaſt doubt.

Mr. Erlen. Yes, Mr. Ditthelm, I believe it to be my own money; yet the manner in which I have recovered it, impoſed a reſtraint upon my conſcience not to look upon it as my own 'till you yourſelf have acknowledged that it is mine.

Ditt. Good God! why heſitate?

Herr Noble minded man! I admire you.

Mr. Erlen. Are you then convinced from the evidence, and the word of an honeſt man, that this money is my real property?

Ditt. How could I think otherwiſe?

Mr. Erlen. I thank thee, God! thou waſt near me in an evil hour! —O may all thoſe that are caſt into deſpair hear my ſtory, and learn to truſt in Providence.

Herr. (*affectionately preſſes Erlen's hand*) Reward to virtue!

Ditt. I rejoice, Mr. Erlen, and am more happy than if I had ſaved the moſt valuable ſhip from the wreck.

Mr. Erlen. That your noble heart has convinced me of.

Ditt. Our account is not quite ſettled yet.

Mr. Erlen. How am I to underſtand that?

Ditt. I am in your debt ten years intereſt of the capital.

Herr. (*aſide*) Bravo!

Mr. Erlen. By no means.

Ditt. Certainly; how can it be your fault that the heir of your debtor did not examine the writing-deſk?

Mr. Erlen. You were then a child.

Ditt. But my guardians; in this caſe I might demand reparation of them; by heaven you ought not, muſt not loſe by it.

Herr. That is honorable, Mr. Ditthelm.

Ditt. It is my duty.

Mr. Erlen. I ſee it; my old friend is ſtill alive; the room juſt as I remember it; here are the ſame old chairs, the ſame clock—and now I find himſelf again—I thank you, dear young man, for your generous offer, although I ſhall make no uſe of it, yet I leave your houſe much happier than if my pockets were ſwollen by your gold.

Ditt. Surely, Mr. Erlen, you muſt accept it.

Mr. Erlen. I muſt not; but reward your noble mind I muſt and will on the ſpot. Beſides the money, a letter was found in his own

hand-writing, a legacy of fatherly love ; here it is.—*(Ditthem eagerly takes the letter, opens it, and reads privately).*

Mr. Erlen. (meanwhile turns to Herrman) Good Hermann! we have not ſeen each other for ſome time—how are you ?

Herr. I am like the horſes in our manufactory ; I tread ſtill upon one ſpot.

Mr. Erlen. It is a pity that buſineſs and ſituation part many good people who were once ſo near each other.

Herr. Ah, dear Mr. Erlen ! with grief of heart I have often recalled to mind how on a Saturday we uſed in this very room to refreſh our ſpirits with a cheerful glaſs, to gather freſh ſtrength for the enſuing week ; I ſhall never forget it.

Mr. Erlen. Three friends, a good glaſs of wine, and a cheerful hour—O, that recreates the heart of man ! it is long ſince I thus gratified myſelf.

Herr. (*looking at Ditthelm*) You weep dear Frederick !

Ditt. (to Erlen) You are right ; it is a fatherly letter.

Mr. Erlen. I am much pleaſed to ſee this ſweet melancholy, and leave you that I may not reſtrain the feelings of your tender ſoul, and that your tears may flow freely—(*gives him his hand*) farewell, Mr. Ditthelm, you have gained my eſteem.

Ditt. If it be ſo, then you do not put me to ſhame ; I ſhall pay you a viſit ; we have ſtill buſineſs to ſettle.

Mr. Erlen. Buſineſs we have not ; but as a friend—the ſon of a friend—you ſhall be heartily welcome.

Ditt. (much moved) And your children ? ſurely you have children ?

Mr. Erlen. They were formerly your companions at play ; come, good young man, and revive in the circle of my family the remembrance of your youthful pleaſures. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.

Ditt. Dear Harrman, what has happened !

Herr. You ſeem much afflicted,

Ditt. Read, Herrman ! (*points to a particular place in the letter*) read out !

Herr. (reads) "And when Sophia Erlen becomes what ſhe promiſes to be, the image of her own and thy good mother, then my ſon do I ſupplicate God that thou mayſt find a father in my friend, and a treaſure in the girl, ſuch as I cannot leave thee ; virtue, love, domeſtic happineſs"—*(ſtops, and looks ſharply at Ditthelm).*

Ditt. (*in deep thought*) Singular! her name is likewiſe Sophia.

Herr. O that theſe wiſhes of your father may not oppoſe your inclination.

Ditt. Good Herrmenn! I love a Sophia, but ſhe is not Erlen's daughter; had I ſeen the other ſooner—perhaps——

Herr. Still whims of chambermaids!

Ditt. Fie, Herrmann! what ſhould I be then, if my delight in virtue, and beauty, where a whim?

Herr. Red and white give beauty; virtue may be diſſembled.

Ditt. Unjuſt man! you wrong her; ſhe herſelf has refuſed my hand.

Herr. What! you had arleady—

Ditt. Followed your advice.

Herr. What precipitation!

Ditt. Precipitation! have I known the girl only ſince yeſterday?

Herr. If a coquette, years will not be ſufficient to find her out.

Ditt. Coquette! Oh how poor Herrmann will be aſhamed when he beholds Sophia!

Herr. I do not look with the eyes of a lover.

Ditt. Her I have to thank that I am ſaved from the ſnares which were laid by ſharpers.

Herr. That is well.

Ditt. It was her that warned me of the danger, even at the hazard of loſing her own bread.

Herr. All well; but perhaps not without a deſign.

Ditt. It was her that from delicacy refuſed me her hand.

Herr. Fine! very fine!

Ditt. And only then began to waver when I touched upon the ſubject of her parent's happineſs.

Herr. Who are her parents?

Ditt. That I know not; however they muſt be good and virtuous people, for no thorn-buſh brings forth ſuch fruits.

Herr. O! why was this letter not ſooner diſcovered?

Ditt. Were my father alive, he himſelf would have torn it.

Herr. You ſhould at leaſt firſt ſee Mr. Erlen's daughter.

Ditt. That I will; that I muſt; yet not with a view of making compariſons—for my choice is fixed.

Herr. Then you had better not ſee her at all.

Ditt. Yes, my friend, I will do for her as much as lies in my power, and what I think conſiſtent with my duty to my father: Erlen has refuſed the intereſt of his capital—good!—I will aſſign the ſame as a dowry to his daughter—do you approve of that?

Herr. It is much, and little, as one takes it.

Ditt. Moſt willingly. I'll do more; I will ſhare with her as a brother; but to my heart ſhe cannot make a claim—that belongs only to

one Sophia—I haſten to fulfil at leaſt half my father's will, and then to Sophia, to reſcue her this very day from an unworthy ſervice. [*Exit.*

Herr. (*ſhaking his head*) Poor youth! I could almoſt wiſh the gameſters and apparitions back again;—they are leſs dangerous than a pair of handſome eyes. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV.

A Room in Mr. Erlen's Houſe—Mrs. ERLEN.

Mrs. Erlen. (*very uneaſy walking up and down*) Solitude! thou waſt formerly ſo pleaſant to me, why to-day ſo offenſive? Fear and Hope! as you were brought forth from the breaſt of man, God thus ſpake, "it is not good for man to be alone!" An approaching misfortune, is like an approaching ſtorm; children and domeſtics like to aſſemble, but I am alone—tormenting uncertainty! each diſtant poſſibility tortures me, and I am quite alone.

SCENE V.

Enter SOPHIA.

Sophia. (*haſtens in and embraces her mother*) My mother!

Mrs. Erlen. O be welcome my dear Sophia, ſtay with me, ah! how happy am I that I have children (*preſſes Sophia to her breaſt*) ſtay with me.

Sophia. What afflicts you, dear mother?

Mrs. Erlen. Your father is gone out—I am quite alone—and ſo melancholy—do not leave me till he returns.

Sophia. Mother! I ſhall never leave you more.

Mrs. Erlen. Would to God child!

Sophia. I have ſuffered much during the year of my ſervitude, yet have learned many things, which although of little uſe, yet will fetch their price: yes mother, I can earn my bread.

Mrs. Erlen. What does that mean?

Sophia. A bed and a table in the moſt diſtant corner of your lodgings—grant me only that!—under your eyes I ſhall work nimbly, and with an eaſy heart, and ſtill find leiſure hours to aſſiſt my mother in her domeſtic cares; do therefore never more drive me from your preſence.

Mrs. Erlen. My child, you know our circumſtances.

Sophia. Let them be ever ſo preſſing, I will ſhare them. Mother, I am diſcharged.

Mrs. Erlen. (*frightened*) diſcharged?

Sophia. Not from improper conduct.

Mrs. Erlen. God! in this critical moment—

Sophia. What I have done, deſerved reward, and heaven granted it on the ſpot: I am again with my parents; I will moſt willingly eat brown bread with them; ah, one reſts no where ſo placidly as in the boſom of ones own family.

Mrs. Erlen. Child you don't know—thy father—we are in ſuch confuſion.

Sophia. Why this anxiety—my mother trembles—what has happened?

Mrs. Erlen. Nothing—ſoon—

Sophia. For God's ſake! is my father ill?

Mrs. Erlen. No, no.

SCENE VI.

Enter. *Enſign* ERLEN.

Erl. (haſtens into the room) Mother! I have heard a report—

Mrs. Erlen. Be quiet.

Erl. Where is my father?

Mrs. Erlen. He is not at home.

Erl. Is it true, that his goods—

Mrs. Erlen. Pray be quiet.

Sophia. What is the matter? My mother's anxiety—my brother's diſquietude—ſpeak Charles, ſpeak.

Mrs. Erlen. Spare her, all may yet turn out well.

Sophia. What has happened?—where is my father?

Erl. I'll haſten to him—take the revered old man to his unfeeling creditors.

Sophia. Creditors?

Erl. I will pay off his debts with the labour of my own hands.

Sophia. Debts? how much? I have got money.

Mrs. Erlen. Children, you torment me—be quiet Sophia—O God! muſt I preach tranquillity to you! we are already acquainted with poverty—I could almoſt ſay related to it—it terrifies only where it is a ſtranger—it is alſo beneficial. O yes, children, poverty is alſo beneficial, becauſe it ſtrengthens the alliance with virtue—God and Virtue! reſign yourſelves to both, and you will be rich, even in poverty! *(going off in tears)* I wiſhed to ſee you around me, and you break my heart.

SCENE VII.

Sophia. (ſobbing) My mother cries.

Erl. She may be allowed to cry, not we; ſiſter, we muſt not cry, but act.

Sophia. How, brother? how?

Erl. We now muſt ſhew what children can do for parents; we are fortunate ſiſter, all children are not; all are not allowed to mitigate their parents fate, and ſave them from hunger; we are Sophia—we will ſave them.

Sophia. How, brother? how?

Erl. We muſt work.

Sophia. Yes.

Erl. In the evening, when off duty, I will hire myſelf to work through the night, no matter to whom, nor at what employment.

Sophia. Yes, yes! in the day time I will work with my needle, and at night will hire myſelf to nurſe the ſick.

Erl. Right, ſiſter; we are young and healthy—two hours ſleep is ſufficient refreſhment, and ſhould we even look pale, yet contentment will ſmile on our cheeks. O! I feel a ſtrength within myſelf—a pleaſing pride! Siſter, it is intended for our dear parents! let us act ſecretly, quite privately, nobody muſt know it not even our parents—God only, and our own hearts.

Sophia. Yes, brother; yes, with pleaſure.

Erl. Poverty, our mother ſaid, ſtrengthens the alliance with virtue—come on, ſiſter, let us honorably conclude this alliance! *(takes her into his arms, and with ecſtacy of joy calls out)* Sophia! I renounce the ſplendour of honour, and the power of love! In thy arms only, will I ſeek my reward after hard labour. We ſhall give bread to our parents! Ah! who can ſay, that the ſtate of our youth is not a happy one? *(preſſes Sophia tenderly to his breaſt, and having embraced her, goes off.)*

SCENE VIII.

Enter DITTHELM, *(who at the moment of their laſt embrace opens the door.*

Ditt. I hardly truſt my eyes.

Sophia. (ſtarts) Mr. Ditthelm—you here?

Ditt. Why thus alarmed?

Sophia. I am not alarmed, only ſurpriſed.

Ditt. To be ſure, it was rather ungenteel of me.

Sophia. What?

Ditt. Oh I have witneſſed a great deal to day, but this laſt was the moſt bitter to me.

Sophia. What has afflicted you?

Ditt. A miſt ſtill covers my eyes—I am ſtill giddy.

Sophia. You ſpeak enigmatically—and I muſt confeſs that the ſtrange accident of ſeeing you here, is a riddle to me.

Ditt. Accident!—quite right. A charming unpropitious accident! You Miſs Sophia, are perhaps here for the purpoſe of fulfilling my commiſſion. I thank you for this punctuality—you had probably other buſineſs alſo.

Sophia. What a tone!

Ditt. Pardon me if I ſpeak unpolitely, I am not authoriſed—

Sophia. Indeed, Mr. Ditthelm, I might have expected different treatment from a man who this day rewards my good intentions with ingratitude.

Ditt. I do not underſtand you.

Sophia. Who, by his loquacity was the cauſe of my diſmiſſal.

Ditt. Have I that? (*civilly and coldly.*) I am very ſorry.

Sophia. (*with reſentment.*) And I am ſorry that I am miſtaken in you.

Ditt. How willingly would I offer you my aſſiſtance.

Sophia. I have no need for it.

Ditt. Some one has been before-hand with me.

Sophia. Who?

Ditt. The young officer, who juſt left you.

Sophia. What of him?

Ditt. He ſeemed to intereſt himſelf ſo warmly.

Sophia. Certainly.

Ditt. You reſted ſo tenderly in this arms—

Sophia. I love him with all my heart.

Ditt. (*bitterly*) Excellent!—an affectionate ſincerity, but rather too late, Miſs.—Oh, good Herrmann! ſurely thou waſt right;—if the girl be a coquette, years will not be ſufficient to find her out.

Sophia. (*offended*) Sir—

Ditt. Thanks to chance that diſſolved theſe chains alſo! yes, now ſhall I fulfil my father's wiſh entire. Where is Erlen? where is his daughter? ſhe may be handſome or ugly—ſtupid or wiſe—ſhe ſhall be mine.

SCENE IX.

Enter Mr. ERLEN.

Ditt. (*haſtening to meet him*) Mr. Erlen, I got here before you.

Mr. *Erlen.* You had no creditors to ſatisfy.

Ditt. The uneaſineſs in which you ſee me——

Mr. Erlen. Is rather ſuſpicious.

Ditt. May I, in preſence of this lady, ſpeak a word in confidence to you.

Mr. Erlen. (*ſmiling*) Nothing need be concealed from this lady.

Ditt. No! ſo much the better.

Sophia. I will retire.

Ditt. No, no, I beg you will ſtay; what I have to ſay will not come unexpectedly to you.

Mr. Erlen. Surely, Mr. Ditthelm, you do not appear to me to be the ſame that you were an hour ago.

Ditt. O, yes! I—I am ſtill the ſame, the ſubjects only around me have changed.

Mr. Erlen. This ſevere tone——

Ditt. Is not intended for you, really not! without further preamble, you poſſeſs a daughter.

Mr. *Erlen.* Yes, Mr. Ditthelm.

Ditt. Is ſhe already promiſed?

Mr. *Erlen.* No.

Ditt. Or is ſhe in love with any one?

Mr. Erlen. That queſtion you muſt aſk yourſelf.

Ditt. I wiſh to become your ſon-in-law. (*with expreſſion while he looks at Sophia with a contemptuous ſmile*) Yes, I wiſh it. (*Sophia ſmiling.*)

Ditt. (*vexatiouſly*) Do not laugh Miſs, I wiſh it with all my heart.

Mr. Erlen. Sir, the offer ſeems to me rather too haſty.

Ditt. No, no, I am a free man, though I was not always ſo—I will confeſs that I loved—and ardently loved—an object unworthy of my eſteem—I was a fool.

Mr. Erlen. Then moſt likely a *début amoureux*, led you to my daughter?

Ditt. Here read this, the wiſh of my father—my ſenſes are returned (*gives him the letter—Erlen reads privately*)

[*Sophia much confuſed, looks down.*

Ditt. (*aſide and ſtealingly looks at Sophia*) She don't ever look at me—but conſcience ſhews itſelf upon her cheeks—ſhe is aſhamed—perhaps repents—too late! too late!

Mr. *Erlen.* Theſe good intentions of my late friend may have ſome influence, but cannot altogether regulate your choice.

Ditt. My choice is fixed.

Mr. *Erlen.* You know my daughter but little.

Ditt. No matter, her parent's virtue is bail for her's.

Mr. Erlen. Has her perſon only attracted you? I would adviſe you to prove her heart alſo.

Ditt. Her perſon? I have never ſeen her.

Mr. Erlen. How, Sir?

Ditt. Is ſhe handſome? very well; if not, ſo much the better. Faith, Mr. Erlen, I wiſh ſhe were ugly.

Mr. Erlen. (with much ſurpriſe) You don't know her?

Ditt. (*impatient*) No, no! but I hope you will ſend for her.

Mr. Erlen. Good heaven! ſhe ſtands here before you.

Ditt. (petrified) Who? this lady your daughter?

Mr. Erlen. Did you not know that?

Ditt. (*after a pauſe beats his forehead*) O cruel fate! thou leadeſt me with a fool's ſtring.

Mr. Erlen. Incomprehenſible! Of all theſe tranſactions I underſtand nothing but the pantomime which eſcaped you juſt now, and which clearly diſcovered that my daughter is diſguſting to you—is it ſo Mr. Ditthelm? then be eaſy, you are bound to nothing.

Ditt. If this be your daughter, then muſt I ſurely renounce the happineſs of finding again a father in you; for, pardon me Miſs the indiſcretion which I am compelled to uſe for my juſtification—this lady has already parted with her heart.

Mr. Erlen. It would grieve me, were I to be firſt informed of that by a ſtranger.

Sophia. My father knows me.

Ditt. Upon my ſoul you ſay that with as much tranquillity, with as much aſſurance, as if no witneſs could confute it.

Sophia. My father will much ſooner rely on my word than believe a miſtaken witneſs.

Ditt. Miſtaken? excellent.

Mr. Erlen. Children, you almoſt bewilder my poor brains. Sophia, it appears to me that you have ſeen this gentleman before.

Ditt. Well gueſſed.

Mr. Erlen. Sophia, will you explain yourſelf more particularly?

Ditt. O no! that ſhe will not.

Sophia. Say all that you know.

Ditt. You take advantage of my delicacy?

Sophia. I only aſſert my innocence.

Ditt. That is too much.

Sophia. I challenge you—ſpeak.

Ditt. Well then! if you inſiſt upon it, I am ſorry, Mr. Erlen, to

awaken you from a ſweet dream. When I entered this room—I found this lady—ſhall I go further?

Sophia. Further! further!

Ditt. In the arms of a young officer—

Mr. Erlen. (to Sophia) Is that true?

Sophia. Yes.

Ditt. O charming! ſhe don't even think it worth while to deny it.

SCENE X.

Enter Mrs. ERLEN *and Enſign* ERLEN.

Mrs. Erlen. (haſtens to her huſbands arm's) Dear huſband, I hear your voice.

Ditt. There he is.

Mrs. Erlen. How were you received?

Mr. Erlen. Very well.

Ditt. Damnation! my tutelar ſpectre.

Mrs. Erlen. Are our ſufferings at an end?

Mr. Erlen. At an end.

Mr. Erlen. God be thanked!

Ditt. (aſide) Ha! that this man ſhould happen to be my benefactor,

Mr. Erlen. Young Ditthelm ſteps in the path of his brave father: he is not inclined to moleſt us—at leaſt not in the way we apprehended. Here he ſtands himſelf.

Mrs. Erlen. Be heartily welcome, Mr. Ditthelm.

Ditt. Pardon me, madam, if at this moment I feel myſelf incapable, as I am overcome by ſo many different adventures. *(to young Erlen)* Sir, I have to-day the good and bad fortune to meet you every where.

Sophia. (ſmiling) Mr. Ditthelm, give me leave to introduce my brother to you.

Ditt. (aſtoniſhed) Your brother?

Erl. We knew each other before.

Sophia. (roguiſhly) Not altogether it ſeems.

Mr. Erlen. What is the matter with you, Mr. Ditthelm?

Mrs. Erlen. The young man ſeems very odd.

Ditt. Brother!

Erl. Doubt it not; neither adopted nor hired.

Mr. Erlen. What does that mean?

Ditt. (falls on his knees and ſtretches out his hands to Sophia) Pardon me, Sophia.

Sophia. Do you deſerve it?

Ditt. I do not.

Sophia. (gives him her hand) Riſe, Mr. Ditthelm.

Ditt. I am aſhamed.

Mr. Erlen. Now I comprehend.

Mrs. Erlen. To me it is a riddle.

Erl. And to me.

Ditt. Blockhead that I was! O, Sophia! you are ſtill indebted to me; an anſwer to the queſtion propoſed this day.

Sophia. In preſence of parents the daughter has no vote.

Ditt. (*to young Erlen*) My benefactor! prove yourſelf ſo a third time; aſſiſt me in procuring the hand of your dear ſiſter.

Erl. In preſence of a ſiſter the brother has no vote.

Mrs. Erlen. If I apprehend rightly, there has been an underſtanding between you before now?

Mr. Erlen. Speak, Sophia! does your heart know any thing of it?

Sophia. Dear mother anſwer for me.

Mrs. Erlen. (kindly reproaching) Have you entruſted me with your ſecret?

Sophia. Have I not? I have perhaps not confeſſed it to myſelf.

Ditt. (*with exultation and enthuſiaſm*) Ha! ſhe loves me! ſhe has decided! good people take me up between you! Sophia! Sophia! (*falls down before her, and preſſes her hand to his lips*).

Mr. Erlen. Bleſſed be my children, and bleſſed be the artiſt that invented the Writing-Deſk.

END OF THE PLAY.

ABBE DE L'EPEE

OR,

THE ORPHAN;

AN HISTORICAL DRAMA,

IN FOUR ACTS,

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN OF KOTZEBUE.

NEW-YORK:

PRINTED FOR CHARLES SMITH, *No. 56 Maiden-Lane.*

1801.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

ABBE DE L'EPEE.
THEODORE.
DARLEMONT . . *his guardian and maternal uncle.*
SAINT ALME . . . . *son of Darlemont.*
FRANVAL . . . . . *a Lawyer.*
DUPRE . . . . . *an old servant.*
DUBOIS . . . . . *Darlemont's valet.*
DOMINIC . . . . FRANVAL'S *Servant.*
MRS. FRANVAL.
CLEMENTINA . . . . . *her daughter.*
RACHEL . . . *widow of Count Solars Porter.*

The SCENE is in Toulouse.

ABBE DE L'EPEE,

OR

THE ORPHAN.

ACL I. *SCENE I.*

A large Square. On one Side is the ancient Palace of COUNT SOLAR—*on another* Mr. FRANVAL'S *Houſe.*

Enter ST. ALME *from the former. He walks a few ſteps, and then rivets his eye on a window of the latter.* DUBOIS *follows him from the palace.*

Dub. WHO could have imagined, ſir, that you were gone out already?—He does not hear me. His whole ſoul——yes, yes, love has a ſtrange effect on mankind. It is a ſort of lottery, in which there are, to be ſure, a few prizes, but the firſt depoſit is the underſtanding, and that is generally loſt.

Alme.—(Awaking from his reverie.)—Ha! Dubois are you here?

Dub. Yes, ſir. I have been looking for you in your own room.

Alme. What do you want?

Dub. To report the converſation, which by your deſire I have had with Dupré.

Alme. Has he told you what are my father's intentions?—for he alone is acquainted with every ſecret.

Dub. True, ſir, I know no ſervant, who is on ſo confidential a footing with his maſter.

Alme. Well?

Dub. I have obeyed your orders, ſir, and have learnt every thing.

Alme.—(Haſtily.)—Doubtleſs my father—

Dub. Honeſt Dupré is not eaſily prevailed upon to be communicative.

Alme. That is immaterial. Tell me only——

Dub. Beſides, he is always ſo melancholy, that one might almoſt fancy he had a bad conſcience.

Alme. Dupré!—Impoſſible!—He is one of the moſt honeſt men on earth. So old a ſervant of my father!—But to the point—I inſiſt upon it.

Dub. Well, ſir—laſt night, when all was quiet in the houſe, I went to Dupré under the pretext of wanting to light my candle. Of courſe we entered into converſation—ſo I ſlily adverted to your father's intentions reſpecting you, and learnt that your ſuſpicions were unfortunately juſt,—that preparations are already making for your union with the Count d'Harancour's daughter.

Alme. Heavens!

Dub. The lady is not handſome, certainly, but ſhe is the only daughter of the oldeſt nobleman in Toulouſe—a man of the firſt conſequence, who can give her an enormous fortune.

Alme. What are to me his riches and his rank?—Would not one look from Clementina overbalance them?

Dub. Miſs Clementina is a moſt lovely creature, I allow, ſir, but I would, nevertheleſs, adviſe you to abandon every idea of marrying her.

Alme. What! Renounce the ſweetest hope life can afford!

Dub. Your father will never give his conſent.

Alme. And why not? Is ſhe not the daughter of a man, whoſe memory is revered by every one in Toulouſe? Is ſhe not the ſiſter of the moſt eminent advocate in the place—a man who makes me happy in the poſſeſſion of his friendſhip?—Her mother is a poor widow, I allow, dependant on her ſon's affection for ſubſiſtence, and conſequently unable to give Clementina any fortune.—But why ſhould I wiſh for any? Has not nature already endowed her with the choiceſt gifts?

Dub. Choice gifts in your eyes, ſir, but you know your father.

Alme. Oh, how hateful to me are theſe golden mountains, which riſe between Clementina and myſelf! In former times—when my father was but a humble merchant, he would have thought it the greateſt honour that an alliance ſhould take place between his family and Franval's, but ſince he came into poſſeſſion of Count Solar's property, whoſe uncle and whoſe guardian he was, ambition has gained a complete aſcendency over him, and he has departed from the path of real happineſs.

Dub. The old people, who were ſervants at our houſe in former times, frequently ſpeak of this Count Solar. Was he not deaf and dumb from his birth?

Alme. He was. About eight years ſince my father took him to Paris for the purpoſe of conſulting ſome eminent medical men reſpecting his caſe, but he was either negligently treated—or his conſtitution was too weak for the neceſſary operations. He died in Dupré's arms, who alone had attended my father on his journey.

Dub. Now I am no longer ſurpriſed that I ſo often find Dupré looking at the picture of this child, which hangs in the ſaloon.

Alme. It is very natural he ſhould do ſo. The young Count was the laſt branch of a noble family, which Dupré had long and faithfully ſerved.—Poor little Julius!—How much were we attached to each other!—To him I am obliged for my life.—How courageouſly did he riſk his own in my defence!—Never, never ſhall I forget it!—He was about ten years of age and I twelve, when we were ſeparated. The moment of his departure is ſtill preſent to me.—Unfortunate Julius!—He could not ſpeak—but how eloquent were his looks—how expreſſive his every action!—With what emotion he preſſed me to his heart—as if aware it was our laſt embrace!—Alas! why is he no more?—Had he lived, I ſhould have had another friend, and my father, in his humbler ſtate, would have willingly conſented to my union with Clementina.

Dub. I hope, however, you are certain your affection is returned, ſir.

Alme. I flatter myſelf with this conviction.—You know, Dubois, that I every morning go to her brother, for the purpoſe of being inſtructed by him as to the nature of our laws. Clementina, on theſe occaſions, always appears under the moſt artful pretexts, which love can ſuggeſt. Her eyes often meet mine, on which ſhe inſtantly bluſhes. When ſhe ſpeaks to me, her voice falters, and her lips tremble. She ſeems to be afraid that her ſecret will eſcape.—If all theſe be not ſymptoms of love, how can it be diſcovered?

Dub. I think, however, that before you proceed, ſir, you ſhould obtain a formal confeſſion of her attachment, and above all things the conſent of her family.

Alme. That her brother will conſent I am certain. His penetrating eye has doubtleſs, long diſcovered the ſituation of my heart, and if this attachment were diſpleaſing to him, would he ſtill hear me in ſo friendly a manner?—No. My only fears are grounded on the mother's character.

Dub. Yes, ſir—the good lady is not ſo eaſily ſatisfied on any occaſion.

Alme. She is deſcended from a noble family, and is ſtill prouder than my father. But I rely on the great influence which her worthy ſon poſſeſſes over her.

[Franval's *door opens, and* Dominic *appears.*

Dub. Here comes the old ſervant. Let us draw him into converſation. It is not very difficult. We may perhaps learn ſomething deciſive reſpecting Miſs Clementina's ſentiments.

[Dominic *comes forward.*

Dom.—*(Good humoured and loquacious.)*—Ha!—I muſt own I little expected to find any body here at ſo early an hour.—*(Shakes hands with* Dub.*)*—Good-day to you neighbours.—*(To* Alme.*)*—Your ſervant, ſir. This morning air purifies the blood, and cools the fancy. At your age too—— well, well—I can eaſily account for your early riſing. Love and ſleep are ſworn enemies.

Dub. What do you mean, Dominic?

Dom. Yes—pretend to be ſurpriſed. I have good eyes, I promiſe you—and though ſixty years of age, I defy any lover to deceive me.—*(To* Alme, *who conſtantly looks towards the window.)*—Ha! You expect us to appear at the window—do you? But we ſhall not riſe ſo early as you wiſh. We were playing on the guitar till two o'clock this morning, and at the ſame time ſinging thoſe pretty verſes, which a certain perſon made on our recovery. We are ſtill faſt aſleep, and perhaps dreaming of the author. Ha! ha! ha!

Alme. Your good humour inſpires confidence, Dominic.—Yes, I love vour young miſtreſs—I adore her.

Dub. And I have been trying to ſubdue his paſſion.

Dom. Subdue it! For what reaſon?

Dub. Come, come, Dominic, your are a ſly experienced old fellow. You muſt have remarked as well as myſelf that Miſs Clementina is far from ſharing the ſenſations ſhe has inſpired.

Dom.—*(Ironically.)*—Have you diſcovered this?

Dub. Very evidently. It is as plain as poſſible.

Dom. Mercy on us! What wonderful penetration! Yes, you are the man to pry into a ſecret.

Alme. Can you have obſerved any thing contrary to the ſuſpicions of Dubois?

Dom. A vaſt deal. I have diſcovered that ſhe loves you, ſir,—that ſhe no longer thinks, acts, and lives but of you, for you, and through you.

Alme. Is it poſſible?

Dub.—*(Apart to* Alme.*)*—Be cautious, if you want to know more.—*(Aloud.)*—But neighbour Dominic, what proofs have you?

Dom. Proofs!—A thouſand. I need but recollect the fever which ſo nearly proved fatal about two months ago. Whoſe name did ſhe conſtantly utter during her paroxyſms?

Alme. Mine.

Dom. When ſhe read the liſt of thoſe, who had enquired after her health, at whoſe name did ſhe always ſtop with a bluſh?

Alme. At mine?

Dom.—(Imitating the voice of an invalid.)—"He called then, Dominic?" ſaid ſhe to me. Yes, madam.—"Often, Dominic?" Every hour, madam.—"And he appeared to be really intereſted?"—"Indeed he did, ma'am. I never ſaw a man more happy in my life than he ſeemed, when I told him you were better."——Then her weak frame began to tremble,—I ſaw a tear gliſten in her eye, and a ſmile for the firſt time play round her pretty lips:—"Yes," ſaid ſhe—"I am better, Dominic—much better——I feel that I am out of danger."—Ha! ha! ha!—

Alme. I confeſs theſe little circumſtances—

Dub. Are in my opinion, by no means ſufficient to prove——

Dom. Not ſufficient!—And the quarrel which I had with her only a few days ſince.—Ha! ha!—excuſe me, ſir,—I cannot refrain from laughter, when I think of it.

Alme. To what do you refer?

Dom. I went into the parlour according to my uſual cuſtom, for the purpoſe of putting every thing into its proper place.—Well—I found Miſs Clementina buſily employed in painting a miniature—ſo buſily indeed, that ſhe no more ſaw me than if I had been a hundred miles from Toulouſe.—Well—I crept on tip-toe behind her chair—for there certainly is nothing more pleaſant than to obſerve the actions of people, who are in love—

Alme. Proceed, proceed.

Dom. Well—I looked at the portrait—You, ſir,—it was you to a nicety.

Alme. Me!

Dom. Yes, you, ſir,—"Well—what a likeneſs!" cried I, without thinking what a fool I was for ſaying a word. Up ſhe roſe, with "Do you think ſo?"—and laid her work aſide.—"Bleſs my heart," ſaid I to her, a man muſt be blind not to diſcover that at the firſt glance. "Indeed! Whom do you think it is intended to reſemble?"—"Why, young Mr. St. Alme, to be ſure."—"St. Alme!" cried ſhe, quite confuſed, and rather angry. "It certainly is not like him. I meant it to be a likeneſs of my brother, and was trying to paint it from memory." "That may be, madam," ſaid I, "but you have certainly made a miſtake, for every feature is Mr. St. Alme's."——"I tell you it is my brother—and no one elſe." Then ſhe hid the portrait in her boſom, walked away, and was for the firſt time in her life out of humour with old Dominic. Ha! ha! ha!

Alme. How happy doſt thou make me!

Dom. But while I am prating here, I forget——

Alme. Stay another moment, honeſt Dominic. You know not with what pleaſure I liſten to you!

Dom. Yes, yes—that I believe, but you know not how many errands I am ſent upon. Firſt the old lady—then the advocate—then

Miſs Clementina!——Above all things, ſir, beware of letting it be known that we have been talking together, for I ſhould be ſcolded—and why?—Young people have a ſtrange way of managing love-affairs. Not a ſoul muſt know their ſecret, though it has been the town-talk for a month.—*(Shakes hands with* Dub.)—Farewell, honeſt Penetration. Oh, you are a ſhrewd obſerver.—You know ſhe does not love your maſter—"Very evidently—It is as plain as poſſible." Ha! ha! ha!

[*Exit.*

Alme. Well, Dubois?

Dub. I am ſatisfied that your affection is completely returned, ſir.

Alme. And ſhall I marry another? Never! Never!

Dub. We muſt immediately deviſe means, then, to counteract your father's purpoſe.

Alme. You muſt aid me in this, Dubois.

Dub. My advice is that you go to Mr. Franval's at the uſual hour, confeſs the whole to him, and make a declaration of your love to Miſs Clementina in the preſence of her brother. After receiving his conſent, go directly to Count d'Harancour, whoſe daughter it is intended to force upon you. Deſcribe your ſituation. He is a worthy man, and will be pleaſed with the candour of your conduct. In this way you will, I think, defeat the ambitious project of your father.

Alme. You are right. I will follow your advice. The ſtep is extremely delicate, I own; but I ſhall conduct myſelf with ſo much reſpect and openneſs, that the Count, who is juſt and generous, will ſympathize in my diſtreſs, nay perhaps even aſſiſt me in obtaining her, who alone can make me happy.—Oh yes, he will, he will. His hotel is not far off. Go, and aſk when I may be allowed to wait upon him. Say I wiſh to have a private interview.

Dub. I will, ſir. Expect me again in a few minutes.

[*Exeunt ſeverally.*

Enter the Abbé de l'Epée *and* Theodore *in travelling dreſſes.* Theo. *walks a few ſteps before the* Abbé, *and approaches in violent agitation---then turns, and makes a ſign.*

Abbé. This ſudden agitation painted in every feature allows me no longer to doubt that this place is known to him.

The.---*(Rivets his eyes on the palace, walks towards the door, ſhrieks, and falls into the* Abbée's *arms.)*

Abbé. What a dreadful tone!---Scarcely can he breathe.---Never have I before ſeen him thus affected!

The.---*(Haſtily gives him to underſtand that he recognizes the houſe of his father. This is done by placing his hands alternately, and ſeveral times upon each other, then ſpreading his fingers to reſemble the*

ſhape of a roof, and laſtly by ſhewing with his right hand the ſize of a child about three feet high.)

Abbe. Yes, thank heaven---he recognizes the habitation of his parents. Beloved, ſweet place, where firſt we ſaw the light, where ſwiftly rolled away the years of childhood, never doſt thou loſe thy lawful claim upon our hearts. No human being is there ſo devoid of ſenſibility as not to feel delighted, when he again beholds thee.

The.—*(Kiſſes the* Abbe's *hands, and endeavours to expreſs his gratitude.)*

Abbe.---*(Replies by ſigns that thanks are due to heaven, not him.)*

The.---*(Immediately kneels, and prays for a bleſſing on his benefactor.)*

Abbe.---(Bending forward with uncovered head.)---O thou, who with almighty power directeſt all our projects---thou, who didſt inſpire me with this great deſign, accept the thanks of an old man, who has acted under thy guidance and protection---accept the thanks of an orphan to whom thou haſt made me a ſecond father.---If I have honeſtly fulfilled my duty---if all my care and trouble may expect a recompence from heavenly juſtice, oh let it light upon the head of this unfortunate young man---let me in his happineſs find my reward.---*(They ſink into each other's arms.)*---Now I muſt learn to whom this palace belongs.

[The. *is going into the houſe, but the* Abbe *holds him back, and imitates a perſon who attempts to ſpeak. but who is driven away without being liſtened to.* The. *underſtands him, and obeys.*]

Enter DUBOIS.

Abbe.---(Aſide.)---Here comes one, whom I may aſk---*(Aloud)* Friend, can you tell me the name of this ſquare?

Dub. The gentlemen are ſtrangers, it appears. It is called St. George's Square.

Abbe. I thank you.---(Dub. *is going.)*---Another word, if you pleaſe. Do you know any thing of this palace?

Dub. To be ſure I do. I have lived five years in it.

Abbe---(Aſide.)---A lucky accident.---*(Aloud.)*---To whom does it belong?

Dub. It was formerly Count Solar's, and now belongs to Mr. Darlemont, in whoſe ſervice I am.

Abbe. Solar! Darlemont!---Who is this Mr. Darlemont?---[*During this converſation,* The. *ſurveys the houſe, and leans againſt the door with a mixture of delight and melancholy.*]

Dub. Who is he!---(*Aſide.*)---This man is very inquiſitive.

Abbe. Yes---his rank, his ſituation---

Dub. Upon my word I know no more of him than that he is one of the richeſt men in Toulouſe.---But I am wanted. You will therefore excuſe me.---*(As he goes into the houſe.)*—Theſe ſtrangers have their ſhare of curioſity, however. [*Exit.*

Abbe. Could he divine why I was ſo inquiſitive——but not a moment muſt be loſt. Firſt let me find ſafe and convenient lodgings.---This palace, which probably bears the name of an ancient family, and this Darlemont, the preſent owner of it, muſt be well known in Toulouſe---I will dive into the myſtery.---(*Preſſes* The. *who anxiouſly approaches, to his heart.*)---If my Theodore has parents poſſeſſed of ſenſibility, how many tears muſt they have ſhed, ſince they loſt him. What tranſports ſhall I feel in reſtoring him to their embrace!---But if he be a ſacrifice to villany---arm me, oh heavenly Providence, arm me with power to redreſs his wrongs. Give mankind through me another proof that ſoon or late the moſt hidden crimes will be diſcovered, and that nothing can eſcape eternal juſtice. [*Exeunt* The. *ſeveral times looking back at the palace.*

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

ACT II. *SCENE I.*

FRANVAL's *ſtudy.* On *his deſk is a flower-pot, and on all ſides are ſeen books, parchments, &c.* FRANVAL *is diſcovered, reading papers.*

Fra. I find it impoſſible to withdraw my attention from the ſubject, on which I am appointed arbitrator. Is there any, indeed, which can be of greater importance to ſociety, or more creditable to a man of my profeſſion?---I am appointed to reconcile a huſband to his wife. Alas! Theſe ſeparations are too frequent---and it behoves every honeſt man to exert himſelf in the prevention of them.

Enter CLEMENTINA *with a ſmall baſket.*

Cle. Good morning, dear brother.

Fra. Clementina, good morning.

Cle. I have brought ſome freſh flowers for your deſk.---(*puts them into the flower-pots.*)

Fra. This daily preſent and your daily kiſs, good ſiſter, makes

me diligent.---*(With a ſmile.)*---I have a friend, too, who would not be averſe to the ſame inſpiration.

Cle.---(*Confuſed*)---Whom do you mean?

Fra. Whom!---You need not bluſh.---(*Riſes, leads her forward, and rivets his eye on her.*)---Clementina?

Cle.---(*Abaſhed.*)---What do you want, dear brother?

Fra. Theſe flowers and your affectionate kiſs are always welcome ---but they will ceaſe to be of any value, if you withhold from me your confidence. Clementina you cannot diſſemble. I perceive——

Cle. Oh, ceaſe!

Fra. Why ſhould you oppoſe an irreproachable attachment? Is not St. Alme in every reſpect deſerving of it?

Cle. I muſt own I have thought ſo.

Fra. I ſay nothing of his perſon and countenance---

Cle. They are noble and expreſſive.

Fra. Of his manners---

Cle. They are polite and captivating.

Fra. I confine myſelf to his mental qualifications. He is a ſenſible, candid, amiable young man. Such a character is to the woman who will be his wife, the ſureſt pledge of happineſs.

Cle. That I have often thought.

Fra. In a word, he loves you.

Cle Do you really think ſo, brother?

Fra. Have you not obſerved it?

Cle. I have been afraid of deceiving myſelf.

Fra. You confeſs, then, that you feel a regard for him?

Cle.---(*Falling into his arms.*)---Brother, you have learnt my ſecret.

Enter ST. ALME.

Alme.---(*Shaking hands with* Fra.)---Good morning, my dear friend.---(*With a reſpectful bow to* Cle.)---Miſs Clementina---

Fra. So early abroad---and ſo gaily dreſſed too! Some affair of conſequence has ſurely cauſed this.

Alme. Of the utmoſt conſequence to me.

Fra. May I know it?

Cle. You ſeem much agitated.

Alme. Who could be otherwiſe in my ſituation? You ſee me in deſpair---

Cle. Heavens!

Alme. My friend, never did I ſo much need your counſel as at preſent.

Fra. Explain yourſelf.

Cle. I will not be any interruption.---(*Going.*)

Alme. No. Stay, I beſeech you. I have juſt had a converſation with my father—

Fra. Upon what ſubject?

Alme. Still do I hear his dreadful menaces.---And why did he uſe them? Becauſe I feel it impoſſible to gratify his ambition. If I could do this by ſhedding my blood, by ſacrificing my life, I ſhould not hesitate---but to renounce my attachment---my firſt attachment---(Clem. *caſts her eyes on the floor.*)---Cruel obdurate parent! Has nature given you any right to make our ſacred feelings the ſlaves of your arbitrary will? Do you give us exiſtence only to make us the victims of ambition?

Fra. Be calm, my friend, and proceed.

Alme. Our converſation turned upon that dreaded alliance, which I before have mentioned to you. My father has informed me that within three days the union muſt take place.—"Within three days!" exclaimed I. "Never! Never! On hearing theſe words, which eſcaped me in a violent tone, my father was ſo much enraged that all attempts to ſoothe him were ineffectual.---At length---feeling myſelf obliged to avow my ſentiments---and being animated with the hope that the name of her I love would diſarm him---I ventured to confeſs that my heart had already made its choice---I named Clementina!

Cle. Clementina!

Alme.—(*Falls at her feet.*)---I cannot, will not any longer conceal my ſenſations. Yes, lovely Clementina---you——you I love---ſhall love for ever; and if my preſumptuous hopes---

Cle.---(*Trembling.*)---Riſe, I beſeech you. What ſaid your father to this?

Alme. "She is an amiable young woman," ſaid he, much embarraſſed, "and in every reſpect worthy of your choice, but I have other views---you muſt forget her." "Impoſſible," cried I, preſſing his hand to my heart. "Impoſſible!" repeated he in a dreadful tone---and now he gave way to all the violence of fury, wounded my ſenſibility with the moſt galling reproaches, threatened me with diſinheritance, and commanded me to quit his preſence for ever.---My blood boiled---my ſenſes almoſt forſook me---I left him---and fled hither, that on the boſom of a friend I might learn to bear the thought of being baniſhed from the boſom of a father.

Fra.---(*Embracing him.*)---I am ready, dear St. Alme, to fulfil that friendly duty. My firſt advice is that you will endeavour to compoſe yourſelf, and never forget that even the errors of a parent demand a reſpectful forbearance on the part of a child.

Alme. He thought to alarm me by his threats---but oh, they have only bound me ſtill cloſer to the object of my innocent attachment. Never did I love more fervently than now. Never was Clementina ſo lovely in my eyes---and if you both conſent---

Fra. Happy ſhould I have been to preſent my ſiſter's hand to you ---happy to have embraced a brother in my friend---and Clementina herſelf---

Cle. Brother!

Fra. Why withhold a confeſſion which will ſo much alleviate his diſtreſs?---Yes, St. Alme, ſincere as is your affection for Clementina, it is only an exchange of ſenſations which you have inſpired.

Alme. Is it then true?---Is my love returned?---Dare I hope to hear a confirmation of my happineſs from yourſelf?

Cle. As my brother has betrayed me, I will no longer conceal my attachment---but alas, why ſhould I avow it, ſince your father---

Alme. Oh, I ſhall prevail on him to renounce his project. What can be impoſſible to the man whom Clementina loves? If, before I had heard this ſweet confeſſion, I oppoſed his fury, ſurely my reſolution muſt be doubled now.—To all his menaces I ſhall anſwer: Clementina loves me—dear father—Clementina loves me.—But I had quite forgotten that I muſt inſtantly ſee Count d'Harancour, whoſe aſſiſtance will be of the greateſt ſervice. I will ſpeak to his feelings —I will deſcribe the ſituation of my heart.—Yes. Who can refuſe to intereſt himſelf in behalf of the man that can boaſt he poſſeſſes the regard of Clementina.

[*Preſſes her hand to his lips, and exit.*

Fra. Why does he go to Count d'Harancour?

Cle. I wiſh his ardour may not make him raſh.

Enter DOMINIC *with ſome books.*

Dub. My miſtreſs deſires to know whether you will breakfaſt in the ſtudy?

Fra. If agreeable to her we will.

Cle. You have not yet ſeen my mother this morning. You know how rigid her ideas are with reſpect to theſe little attentions.

Fra. I have been ſo buſy—but I'll go and bring her hither.

Cle. In the mean time, I'll ſee that breakfaſt is forwarded.

[*Exeunt* Fra. *and* Cle.

Dom.—(*Lays the books on the deſk.*)—There! My name is not Dominic if I have not walked two miles this morning.—Let me ſee whether I have executed all my commiſſions.—(*Draws out a liſt.*)—for if not, the old lady will be ſure to tell me again that I have loſt my memory, and I am of no uſe.—(*Reads.*)—"To invite Mrs. Doubray and the prior of St. Mark in the name of my miſtreſs." That's done. "To call at the library for ſome books ordered yeſterday." There they are. "To ſee the pariſh officers, and tell them not to proceed againſt the poor people, whoſe houſe was burnt, they being rea-

dy to pay the ſix hundred livres." Now would I bet a round ſum, that theſe ſix hundred livres came out of my maſter's own pocket, to ſave an unfortunate family from ruin. "To leave two Louis d'ors in Laurence-lane, ſent by Miſs Clementina to the widow of the late Count Solar's porter."—Ay, poor old ſoul! How ſhe bleſſed Miſs Clementina—and well ſhe might, for ſuch a charitable friend is not found every day.—But mercy on us, here they come, and the cloth is not laid.—*(Draws a table forward, and brings breakfaſt.)*

Enter FRANVAL, Mrs. FRNAVAL, *and* CLEMENTINA.

Mrs. F. I tell you, ſon, there are very few families in Toulouſe as ancient as our's and I hope you will always remain worthy of your anceſtry, though you are but an advocate.

Fra. I think, dear mother, my profeſſion would be an honour to any one.—*(They ſeat themſelves to breakfaſt.)*

Mrs. F. I confeſs, ſon, it mortifies me that you are not a ſeneſchal like your father, but misfortunes and the injuſtice of mankind compelled me to ſell that office at his death.

Fra. I am therefore obliged to my talents and exertion for the reſpect which I ſhould otherwiſe only have acquired by accident and prejudice.

Mrs. F. I know very well that you hold a conſpicuous place in the courts, but ſtill it is a kind of degradation.

Dom. This letter is juſt come for you, madam, from Mr. Darlemont.

Fra. Mr. Darlemont!

Mrs. F. What can he want with me?—*(Reads.)*—"Madam, allow me to addreſs you in defence of my moſt ſacred rights."—What can he mean? Leave us, Dominic.—(*Exit* Dom.)—"My moſt ſacred rights. My ſon loves your daughter, and aſſerts that the attachment is mutual."

[*Cle. is much agitated.* Mrs. F. *caſts a ſevere look towards her.*]

Fra. Proceed, I beg, dear mother.

Mrs. F. "Violent as may be the paſſion of my ſon, and amiable as the object of it may be, this connection can never take place."—No, ſir, it certainly cannot.

Cle.—*(Aſide)*—What torture!

Fra. Finiſh the letter, I beſeech you.

Mrs. F. "I therefore hope, madam, that you will forbid his viſits to your houſe, and no longer afford him any opportunity of bidding defiance to the rights and dignity of his father.—Darlemont,—No longer afford him an opportunity! Did any one ever hear ſuch impertinence?

Fra. Be calm, dear mother.

Mrs. F. And who told this petty merchant, who became ſuch a great man as it were but yeſterday, that I wanted an alliance with his family. He might recollect, I think, that rich as he may be, there is a material inequality between his rank and mine.—I hope, ſon, that after this inſult you will order your doors to be ſhut on young St. Alme, and as for his father, if ever——

Enter DOMINIC.

Dom. A ſtranger wiſhes to wait on you, ſir.

Fra. A ſtranger!

Dom. Yes—an old man with grey hair. He looks like a prieſt.

Fra. Let him come. [*Exit.* Dom.

Mrs. F.—(*ſtill reading the letter.*)—"This connection can never take place." The upſtart!

Cle.—(*Aſide to* Fra.)—Oh brother, I am loſt.

Dom.—(*Without*)—This way, ſir, if you pleaſe.

Enter ABBE.

Abbe.—(*After the uſual ſalutations.*)—Have I the honour of ſpeaking to Mr. Franval, the advocate?

Fra. I am that perſon.

Abbe. Could you ſpare a quarter of an hour.—

Fra. With great pleaſure. May I aſk with whom I have the pleaſure of converſing?

Abbe. I live at Paris. My name is De l'Epée.

Fra. De l'Epée! But not the founder of an inſtitution for inſtructing the deaf and dumb.

Abbe. The ſame.

Fra. Mother—ſiſter—you ſee a man before you, who does honour to the age he lives in.—(*The ladies move reſpectfully.*)

Abbe.—(*Avoiding his praiſe.*)—Sir, I——

Fra. I often read the miraculous account of your ſucceſs, and am always ſtruck with aſtoniſhment and admiration. Be aſſured that no one feels a greater intereſt in your exertions, and more reſpect for your name than myſelf.

Abbe. Happy is it for me, then, that I applied to you.

Fra. What has procured me this good fortune?

Abbe. Your reputation, ſir. I have to impart a matter of the greateſt conſequence.

Mrs. F. Come, Clementina, we will not be any hindrance.

Abbe. What I have to diſcloſe cannot be too public. Above all things I wiſh to intereſt feeling hearts, and if theſe ladies will liſten to me——

Mrs. F. As you allow it—

Cle.—(Aside.)—What a friendly tone, and what a venerable appearance!

Fra. Be ſeated, I beg.—(*All take chairs.*)

Abbe. I ſhall be ſomewhat diffuſe, and yet I can omit nothing, which may aſſiſt me in the attainment of my object.

Fra. We are all attention.

Abbe. It is about eight years ſince an officer of the police in Paris brought to me a boy who was deaf and dumb. He had been found on the *Pont Neuf*, appeared to be about nine or ten years of age, and was of an engaging appearance. The coarſe tatters with which he was clothed, made me at firſt ſuppoſe he belonged to poor people, and I promiſed to take care of him.—The next morning, when I examined him more minutely, I obſerved a certain dignity in his looks. He ſeemed aſtoniſhed at finding himſelf in rags, and I ſuſpected that it was not without ſome intention he had been thus clothed and expoſed. I immediately publiſhed the circumſtance, and accurately deſcribed his perſon in the newſ papers, but without effect. It is not uſual with mankind to be too eager in acknowledging thoſe who are unfortunate.

Fra. Alas, you are right, ſir. How much is human nature degraded!

Abbe. As I perceived that all inveſtigation was in vain, and as I was convinced that this child was the victim of ſome ſecret intrigue, I now merely endeavoured to obtain information from himſelf. I called him Theodore, and received him among my pupils. He ſoon diſtinguiſhed himſelf, and ſo entirely juſtified my hopes, that after the expiration of three years, his mind expanded, and he was (if I may uſe the expreſſion) a ſecond time created. I converſed with him by ſigns, which in rapidity almoſt equalled thoughts.—One day, as we drove paſt a court of juſtice in Paris, he ſaw a magiſtrate ſtep from his carriage, and was unuſually agitated. I aſked the reaſon, and he gave me to underſtand that a man like this, clothed in purple and ermine, had often embraced him, and ſhed tears over him. From this I concluded that he muſt be the ſon or near relation of ſome magiſtrate, who, from his robes, could only belong to a ſuperior court of juſtice; conſequently that my pupil's native place was probably a town of conſiderable ſize.——Another time, as we were walking together, we met the funeral of a nobleman. I immediately perceived the former agitation in Theodore, which increaſed as the proceſſion came nearer. At length the hearſe paſſed us—he trembled, and fell upon my neck. I queſtioned him, and he replied by ſigns that a ſhort time before he was conveyed to Paris, he had followed the hearſe. in which was the man, who had ſo often careſſed him. From this I concluded he was an orphan, and the heir to a large fortune, of which his relations had

been induced to deprive him by his helpleſs ſituation. Theſe important diſcoveries doubled my zeal and reſolution. Theodore became daily more intereſting to me, and I began to cheriſh hopes of regaining his property for him. But how to begin my ſearch? He had never heard his father's name; he knew not where he had received exiſtence. —I aſked him whether he remembered when he was firſt brought to Paris.—He anſwered in the affirmative, and aſſured me he ſhould know the gates through which he entered. The very next morning we went forth to examine them, and when we approached thoſe which are called *de l'Enfer*, he made a ſign that he recognized them; that the carriage was there examined, and that his two conductors, whoſe features ſtill were preſent to his mind, alighted with him there.—Theſe new diſcoveries proved that he came from the ſouth of France. He added that he was ſeveral days on the road—and that the horſes were changed almoſt every hour. After making calculations from his ſeveral ſtatements, I concluded that his native place was one of the principal towns in the ſouth of France.

Fra. Oh, how penetrating is the mind when inſpired by philanthropy! Proceed, proceed.

Abbe. After numberleſs unavailing enquiries by letter, I at laſt reſolved to make a tour through the ſouthern towns with Theodore. The various circumſtances, which he ſo minutely recollected, made me hope that he would eaſily recognize the place of his nativity. The undertaking was certainly difficult, for I thought all expectations of ſucceſs were idle, unleſs our journey was performed on foot. I am old, but heaven was pleaſed to grant me ſtrength. In ſpite of age and infirmity I left Paris above two months ago. I paſſed through the gates *de l'Enfer*, which Theodore again recognized. When we had left Paris a little way behind us, we embraced each other, prayed that heaven would guide our ſteps, and purſued our way with confidence. We have viſited almoſt every place of magnitude, and now my ſtrength was beginning to fail—my conſolatory hopes were nearly exhauſted, when this morning we arrived before the gates of Toulouſe.

Fra.—(*With extreme anxiety.*)—Well?

Abbe. We entered the town—Theodore haſtily ſeized my hand, and made a ſign that he knew it. We proceeded.—At every ſtep his appearance became more animated, and tears fell from his eyes. We arrived at the market-place, when ſuddenly he threw himſelf on the earth, and raiſed his hands towards heaven—then ſprung up, and informed me he had now found the place of his birth. Like him intoxicated with delight, I forgot all the fatigues of my journey. We wandered to other parts of the town, and at length reached this ſquare. He eſpied the palace. Exactly oppoſite to your houſe, uttered a loud ſhriek, threw himſelf breathleſs into my arms, and pointed out the

habitation of his father's.—I made enquiries, and learn that this palace formerly belonged to the family of Count Solar, the laſt branch of which is my pupil,—that all his property is in the poſſeſſion of a Mr. Darlemont, the guardian and maternal uncle of the young Count, by a falſe declaration of whoſe death, he became poſſeſſed of it.—I immediately tried to diſcover who was the moſt eminent advocate in Toulouſe, that I might entruſt him with this important buſineſs.—You were mentioned to me, ſir, and I am come to place in your hands what is deareſt to me in the world—the fate of Theodore. Heaven ſent him to me that I might educate him. Receive him from my hands, and let your exertions reſtore to him the rank and fortune, to which he is entitled by the laws of nature and of France.—*(All riſe)*

Fra.—(With enthuſiaſm.)—Rely on me—rely ſecurely on the fervent zeal, which the confidence of ſuch a man inſpires. Never was I ſo happy—never ſo proud of my profeſſion.—Oh ſir, you know not how it delights me to be of ſervice to you.—*(Attempts to kiſs the* Abbe's *hand, who opens his arms, into which* Fra. *ruſhes.)*

Abbe. Yes, I can rely on you entirely. I ſee your tears.

Cle. Who can be ſo unfeeling as not to be affected by ſuch a recital?

Fra. It is a painful circumſtance that I ſhould find the father of my friend ſo criminal, and I muſt beg you will in the firſt inſtance allow me to make every attempt which caution and delicacy will allow. Should theſe fail, I will unmaſk the hypocrite.

Mrs. F. I burn with deſire to ſee him humbled in the duſt from which he roſe.

Cle.—(Aſide.)—Happy proſpect! St. Alme will now be as poor as myſelf.

Fra. But where did you leave your Theodore?

Abbe. At an inn, where he doubtleſs expects me with impatience.

Fra. Why did you not bring him hither?

Cle. I ſhould be moſt happy to ſee him.

Abbe. A perſon who is deaf and dumb always creates diſtreſſing ſenſations. I was, therefore, afraid that his preſence——

Fra. Surely not that it would diminiſh the intereſt inſpired by his ſituation?

Abbe—(Taking his hand.)—Hearts like your's are not every where to be found.

Fra. You muſt bring him to us—nay, I require more. The young man ſhould not be left alone, when we are taking ſteps for him, which make his preſence neceſſary. Accept a room in my houſe. Never have I, with greater pleaſure, fulfilled the duties of hoſpitality.

Abbe. You are too good. I only fear——

Mrs. F. Sir, you will do us an honour by accepting my ſon's invitation.

Cle. After ſo fatiguing a journey you muſt want repoſe, and you will no where find yourſelf leſs diſturbed than with us.

Abbe. Such intreaties I cannot withſtand. I will go for my pupil.

Fra. And I will, in the mean time, conſider how we ſhould proceed. That we have to ſurmount many difficulties, I muſt not conceal from you. To counteract legal evidence—to wreſt a conſiderable fortune from an ambitious and powerful uſurper—to convict him of ſo atrocious a crime——all this requires the greateſt caution.

Abbe. I rely entirely on your wiſdom and talents. Be the event what it may, the conſcious recollection of having done my duty, and your acquaintance, ſhall be my rewards.

[*Exit.*

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

ACT III.

The ſame room. *Enter* CLEMENTINA *and* DOMINIC.

Dom. No madam. Mr. St. Alme is not yet returned home.

Cle. How unfortunate! Never was his preſence more neceſſary.

Dom.—*(Smiling.)*—Don't be afraid. He will not fail to come, I promiſe you. If he ſuſpected that his company was ſo much wiſhed for, he would have certainly——

Cle. Dominic, have you given the money to old Rachel, as I directed?

Dom. To be ſure I have.—Poor ſoul! She was ſeated at her ſpinning-wheel, when I entered. "Good day to you, Rachel!" ſaid I. "Your ſervant, Mr. Dominic. I hope your good young miſtreſs is well."—"Quite well, Rachel, and how are you?"—"Why ſo ſo"—and here the poor creature began to cough—"but I ſtill contrive to work for my living."—"There is a preſent from Miſs Clementina. Take it Rachel." "How! What! Two Louis d'ors!—Oh the dear generous lady!" Then ſhe kiſſed the money—then began to pray for your happineſs and health.—I'll lay my life that ſhe comes to thank you in the courſe of to-day.

Cle. Honeſt Rachel! how willingly do I aſſiſt her!—I never ſhall

forget how attentive ſhe was during my illneſs. When ſhe comes, Dominic, contrive that no one may ſee her except myſelf.

Dom. I will.—Poor old creature! Her circumſtances are ſadly reduced! When her late huſband was porter to Count Solar, ſhe wanted nothing; but Mr. Darlemont unmercifully drove them both out of doors, with all the reſt who had been in the ſervice of his brother-in-law. The honeſt porter died broken-hearted, and many of the reſt would have followed him, if Mr. St. Alme's generoſity had not——

Cle. Mr. St. Alme certainly wiſhes to make every atonement for his father's injuſtice.

Dom. True, madam. One is as proud, gloomy, and ſevere, as the other is open, friendly, and liberal.——Oh, he will one day be a good maſter—and a good huſband too.—Don't you think ſo, Miſs Clementina?

Cle.—(Confuſed.)—Undoubtedly—I believe—that whoever obtains his affections——

Dom. Some one has already obtained them.

Cle. Indeed!

Dom. I know it to a certainty.

Cle. Right! I remember to have heard that he is engaged to Count d'Harancour's daughter.

Dom. I have heard as much too—but that match will never take place.

Cle. Do you think it will not?

Dom. To be ſure I do. We love another lady.—We prefer content to riches. Every one has his taſte—and we have therefore caſt our eyes upon one of the moſt amiable objects——

Cle. Is the room in order, which the ſtrangers will occupy?

Dom. Not quite.

Cle. Go then, and make every thing ready. They will be here directly.

Dom. Well, well—I am going.—*(Aſide)*—I never can prevail upon her to own that ſhe loves him. [*Exit.*

Cle. This old man delights in tormenting me. I felt my cheeks glow at every word he uttered.——At preſent I will confine my ideas to this important diſcovery of the venerable De l'Epée—and the new hope which it inſpires.—Should Darlemont loſe his fortune, the gulf between his ſon and me will vaniſh. Love will be no longer ſubſervient to ambition, but will enforce its rights.—Yet will my mother, who thinks herſelf inſulted by his conduct—Soft! They come.

Enter Mrs. FRANVAL *and* FRANVAL.

Mrs. F. And can you, ſon, have any heſitation in delivering over ſuch a wretch to the vengeance of the law? By being merciful you become an accomplice in the crime.

Fra. Can I forget that Darlemont is the father of my friend?—*(To* Cle.*)*—Has Dominic requeſted St. Alme to come hither?

Cle. Yes, brother, he has left a meſſage with the ſervant, St. Alme was not within.

Mrs. F. I muſt own, ſon, that after receiving ſo inſolent a letter from the father, I do not wiſh to ſee the ſon in my houſe.

Fra. Is it juſt that he ſhould ſuffer for his father's miſconduct?

Cle. My dear mother, he is ſo far from approving of his father's behaviour, that he wiſhes to make every one forget it.

Mrs. F. But ſuch a letter I never will forget.

Fra. Were Darlemont alone concerned in this caſe, I would without mercy tear away the veil, and expoſe him to the abhorrence of mankind! but you know the power of prejudice. I cannot unmaſk him, without attaching diſgrace to his innocent ſon.

Cle. Yes—innocent he is indeed. How often in our preſence has he lamented the death of his couſin!—How many tears has he ſhed, when he called to mind the companion of his infancy! It is impoſſible to unite greater openneſs with more tender ſenſibility. It is impoſſible—*(Her mother looks at her with a frown—ſhe turns to* Fra.*)*—Am I not right, brother?

Fra. Undoubtedly. No one can know St. Alme without being convinced.—But ſee—here come our gueſts.

Enter ABBE *and* THEODORE.

Abbe. I have brought my Theodore.

[The. *bows with a friendly air to all, and at laſt fixes his eyes on* Clem.]

Mrs. F. The exact image of his late father!

Abbe. Indeed, madam!—do you perceive that?

Mrs. F. I never ſaw ſo ſtrong a likeneſs.

[The. *gazes with a penetrating look at* Fra.

Fra. His countenance is expreſſive, and commands reſpect. It bears the ſtamp of his inſtructor's mind.

[The. *makes ſigns to the* Abbé. *He places his right hand on his forehead, and then ſtretches out his arm with force and dignity.*]

Fra. What does this imply?

Abbe. That he reads in your appearance the certainty of ſucceſs.

Fra. Yes. I pledge my ſacred promiſe he ſhall regain his rights.—*(Embraces* The.*)*

[The. *with a look of diſtreſs puts his hand to his mouth, and then to his ears—he graſps one of* Franval's *hands and lays it on his heart.*)

Fra. What means this?

Abbe. That he cannot expreſs his gratitude by words, but that you may feel it by the beating of his heart.

Fra. Is it poſſible you can ſo exactly underſtand him?

Abbe. Perfectly.

Mrs. F. He can comprehend what you mean, too?

(The. *again fixes his eyes on* Cle.

Abbe. Moſt certainly. By this alone was I able to improve his mind and heart.

Cle. How attentively he obſerves me!

Abbe. Be not ſurpriſed at that: genuine beauty always attracts his notice. Nature, who has been, in many reſpects, ſo cruel a ſtep-mother to him, has made ſome reparation by granting him a nicety of inſtinct, and a mind which takes impreſſions with a facility moſt wonderful and rapid. The genius of perſons in his unfortunate ſituation, when once ſummoned into action, makes much greater progreſs than our own. I have, among my pupils, profound mathematicians, able hiſtorians, and diſtinguiſhed literati. This very youth, who ſtands before you, obtained the prize laſt winter for his ſkill in poetry, and to the great aſtoniſhment of his competitors, was openly crowned in the Lyceum.

Fra. I remember that the newſpapers mentioned this phenomenon, and conſecrated the name of De l'Epée to immortality.

Cle. But how is it poſſible that one who is deaf and dumb, ſhould comprehend and expreſs—

Abbe. He can even anſwer any queſtion on the ſpot. I'll give you an example.—(*Strikes* The. *on the ſhoulder to awake his attention, points with the fore-finger of his right hand to his forehead, then to* Cle. *and finally ſeems to write ſome lines on his left hand.*)

(The. *makes a ſign that he underſtands him—ſeats himſelf at the deſk and prepares to write.*)

Abbé. Now aſk any queſtion. Through the interpretation of my ſigns he will comprehend it, and write it on paper with his anſwer below. He awaits your commands.

Cle. I ſcarcely know what queſtion——

Abbe. The firſt that occurs to you.

Cle.—(*After a moment's conſideration.*)—Who is, in your opinion, the greateſt man now exiſting in France?

Abbe. Now have the goodneſs to begin once more, and repeat the words ſlowly as if you were dictating them to himſelf.

[The. *attends and writes.*

Cle. Who is——

[Abbé *throws both hands forward, ſpreading his fingers, and then with the fore-finger of his right-hand, deſcribes a ſemicircle from right to left.*]

Cle. In your opinion.

[Abbé *points to his forehead—then to* The.

Cle. The greateſt man.

[Abbé. *raiſes his right-hand thrice, and then both hands as high as poſſible—then lets them ſink to his ſhoulders, and thence over his breaſt quite to his waist.*]

Cle. Now exiſting.——

[Abbé *deſcribes life by drawing his breath deeply ſeveral times and placing his hand on his pulſe.*]

Cle. In France.

[Abbé *raiſes both hands and points to every thing around him.*]

[*All theſe ſigns muſt be made with minuteneſs, but alſo with rapidity that the action of the ſcene may not be ſuſpended.*]

Abbe.—(*Takes the paper from* The. *and preſents it to* Fra.)—In the firſt place you perceive that he has written the queſtion properly.

Fra. It is faithful and correct.

[Abbé *returns the paper to* The. *who ſits in a meditating attitude.*]

Cle. He ſeems embarraſſed.

Abbe. The queſtion is rather of a difficult nature, you muſt allow.

[Theodore's *features become gradually more animated, and he writes.*]

Fra. What fire darts from his eyes! What animation is there in his every feature! He ſeems at the ſame time ſatisfied and affected. I am much miſtaken, if his anſwer will not bear the united marks of ſenſibility and underſtanding.

[The. *riſes, preſents the paper to* Cle. *and makes a ſign requests ſhe will read it.* Fra. *and his mother approach with great curioſity.* The. *places himſelf cloſe to the* Abbé, *and anxiouſly obſerves them.*]

The.—(*Reads.*)—"Queſtion: Who is in your opinion the greateſt man at preſent living in France?—Anſwer: Nature names Buffon; the ſciences d'Alembert; truth and feeling ſpeak in behalf of Rouſſeau; wit and taſte of Voltaire; but genius and humanity loudly declare,—the Abbé de l'Epée. Him I prefer to all."

(The. *Repreſents a pair of ſcales, by letting his hands riſe and ſink alternately—he then raiſes one hand as high as poſſible, points with the fore-finger of the other at the* Abbé, *and falls into his arms.*)

Abbe.—(*Preſſes him to his heart with emotion, which he endeavours, but in vain to hide.*)—Pardon his miſtake; it ariſes from enthuſiaſtic gratitude.

Fra.—(*Looking at the paper.*)—My aſtoniſhment cannot believe it.

Mrs. F. No one but a witneſs of the tranſaction would believe it.

Cle. I can ſcarcely ſuppreſs my tears.

Fra. This anſwer at once indicates refined taſte and extenſive knowledge. What endleſs care and trouble muſt it have coſt you to produce ſuch conſequences!

Abbe. To tell you how much it has coſt me is impoſſible; but the exalted idea of being, as it were, a new creator, inſpired me with ſtrength and reſolution. If the peaſant feels delight when he beholds the abundant harveſt, which rewards his induſtry; judge what muſt be my ſenſations, when I ſtand in the midſt of my pupils, and ſee how the unfortunate beings emerge by degrees from darkneſs; how they become animated by the firſt beam of heavenly light; how they ſtep by ſtep diſcover their powers, impart their ideas to each other, and form around me an intereſting family of which I am the happy father.—Yes, there are many more brilliant delights—many more eaſily attained—but I doubt whether in univerſal nature there is one more real.

Fra. And believe me, of all the celebrated men whom Theodore has accurately deſcribed, none will ſo long live in the recollection of poſterity as you. If France be ready to erect monuments in commemoration of our heroes, can ſhe refuſe one to the creative genius which by perſevering induſtry and patience unexhauſtible, made amends for the forgetfulneſs of nature?

Dom.—(Within.)—But I tell you, Rachel, you muſt come at another time. Miſs Clementina cannot ſee you now.

Enter RACHEL *and* DOMINIC.

Rac. Not ſee me!—I muſt thank her—I muſt kiſs her hand.

Dom.—(Aſide to Cle.)—It was impoſſible to keep her back.

(The. *caſts a look towards* Rac. *and ſeems to be ſtruck with ſome ſudden recollection.)*

Rac. Forgive me, madam, if I take the liberty; and you, dear Mr. Advocate, if I diſturb you; but my heart was ſo full that I could not ſtay at home. I came to thank my good kind-hearted Miſs Clementina.——

Cle. Rachel, it is not worth while—

Rac. Oh, allow me, dear lady—

Mrs. F. Daughter, what means all this?

(The. *Examines every feature of* Rac. *is greatly agitated, and makes ſigns to the* Abbé, *which the latter obſerves with joy and aſtoniſhment.* The. *imitates a man, who knocks at a door, and then points at* Rac.)

Rac. Her baſhfulneſs will not let her anſwer, but I came to relieve my heart. You muſt know, madam, that ſince Miſs Clementina recovered from her illneſs, ſcarcely a day has paſſed without her ſending cloaths or victuals to me, and only this morning Mr. Domi-

nic brought me two Louis d'ors, which will enable me to aſſiſt ſome of my poor neighbours.—*(Kiſſes* Clementina's *hand)*—Oh, how ſincerely I thank you!

Abbe. Good woman—

Rac. Sir!

Abbe. Were you not in the ſervice of the late Count Solar?

Rac. My huſband was his porter five-and-thirty years.

Abbe. Do you remember to have ever ſeen little Julius, who was deaf and dum?

Rac. Rember it! Many a time have I carried him in my arms.—Alas! We ſuffered ſo much by his death, that I ſhall never forget him.

Abbe. (Leads her to The. *who gazes at her with great emotion.)*—'Tis well. Look at this youth—

Rac. What do I ſee?—Is it poſſible.

Abbe. Examine him minutely.

[The. *removes the hair from his face that ſhe may ſee all his features—then ſignifies by ſigns that when he was a child, ſhe had carried him in her arms.*]

Rac. It is Julius—it is he, whom we all loved ſo much; whoſe death we ſo much lamented.—Oh yes, yes; I recognize him.—*(Falls at his feet.)* [The. *raiſes and embraces her.*

Dom. And I was ſuch a fool as to tell her ſhe muſt not come in.

Abbe. What a ſtrange but important diſcovery!

Fra. True. It will doubtleſs procure us inconteſtible evidence.

Mrs. F. And this haughty Darlemont will be humbled. That delights me above every thing.

Cle. While ſecretly aſſiſting a fellow-creature in diſtreſs, I have ſupported a witneſs for the injured Theodore.—Oh celeſtial charity!

Rac. Oh that my poor huſband were alive!—But how happens it that this dear youth, whom we thought dead, ſhould now be in Toulouſe? By what miracle—

Abbe. You ſhall know every thing, good woman.—But tell me—are you ſo firmly convinced of ſeeing Julius Count Solar before you, that you will teſtify this before a court of juſtice?

Rac. Before God and all the world.

Fra. Can you not procure us the evidence of ſome old ſervants, who, as well as yourſelf, knew the young Count in his infancy.

Rac. Oh yes! The coachman's widow is ſtill alive.

Dom. And Peter the groom. He came with his wife to ſee me only a few days ſince. They live at no great diſtance.

Mrs. F. They ſhould be ſent for immediately.

Dom. I'll run——

Fra. Stay.—*(To the* Abbe.)—I have already told you that my

friendſhip for St. Alme makes forbearance at firſt my duty. Let us therefore, go to Darlemont; let us make our united attack, you with the irreſiſtable arms of Nature's interpreter—I with the language of our laws, and all the force which a juſt cauſe inſpires. Hardened in villainy as he may be, we ſhall prevail.

Abbe. You are right, and I think I know the means, which will inſure ſucceſs.—*(Leads* The. *aſide, and informs him by ſigns what they have reſolved upon.)*

Fra.—(To the reſt.)—I recommend profound ſecrecy to you all.

Rac. I promiſe it.

Dom. Be at eaſe on my account.

Mrs. F. As for me, I ſhall make no ſuch agreement.

Cle. But dear mother——

Mrs. F. But dear daughter—you may ſay what you like. But I will not deprive myſelf of the pleaſure which I feel in declaring my opinion of this Darlemont. He is an ambitious wretch, who ought to be humbled—an abandoned villain, who ought to be ſeverely puniſhed. [*Exeunt.*

END OF THE THIRD ACT.

ACT IV.

Scene,—*A magnificent room in* COUNT SOLAR'S *palace.*

Dar. My ſon not yet returned?

Dub. No, ſir.

Dar. And forbad you to follow him?

Dub. He did, ſir.

Dar. Can he, in defiance of his father, be at Franval's?

Dub. Scarcely, ſir; for Mr. Franval has juſt ſent to enquire for him.

Dar. Go, and remain with the porter 'till he arrives—then tell him to come hither inſtantly—inſtantly I ſay. [*Exit* Dub.

Well, Dupré, what do you want?

Dup.—(Who, when he entered the room, appeared to be much dejected, draws forth a purſe.)—I come, ſir, to return the five-and-twenty Louis d'ors, which you ſent this morning.

Dar. Return them! Why?—They are the firſt half-yearly payment of the penſion which I lately granted for your ſervices.

Dup. I beg, ſir, you will take them again. It is impoſſible I can receive money for a deed which will oppreſs my heart as long as I live.

Dar. Will you never forget this boy, then?

Dup. Never. His image is always preſent to me. How well do I recollect the look, which he caſt towards me, when——

Dar. No more of this! What regard could you or any one feel for a mere automaton?

Dup. But you muſt allow, ſir, he had good natural abilities and an excellent heart. Young as he was, whenever he ſaw a beggar he would relieve him. He knew no greater pleaſure than to ſhare all he had with others.—And ſurely, ſir, you recollect that he ſaved your ſon's life. Mr. St. Alme had thrown ſtones at a dog till it turned and attacked him. Julius ſaw the danger, flew like lightning to his aſſiſtance, and fell upon the furious beaſt, by which he received a dangerous wound in his right arm.

Dar. How often am I to be reminded of this!

Dup. Does it not prove that the young Count poſſeſſed as much courage as goodneſs of heart?—Alas! Who can know this better than myſelf? I was the confidential ſervant of his father—I attended him during his childhood—yet I (oh, infamous!) I was prevailed upon to forſake him, and become an accomplice in your guilt.

Dar.—(incenſed.)—Dupré!

Dup. Yes, ſir—an accomplice in your guilt. The man who has deprived an old ſervant of his peace of mind, after his conduct had been irreproachable for fifty years, ought to hear his complaints and reſpect his ſufferings.

Dar.—(Suppreſſing his rage—aſide.)—I muſt be calm.—*(Aloud.)*—My dear Dupré, this exceſs of ſenſibility miſleads you. Is it poſſible that after having poſſeſſed my confidence ſo long, you can betray me?

Dup. Oh, what ſervice would it be? Where could we now expect to find the unfortunate young man?—No. I have promiſed ſecrecy, and my promiſe ſhall be ſacred, but only on condition that you never again remind me of your hateful penſion. My conſcience is ſufficiently oppreſſed, and ſhall not be loaded with the ſtill further guilt of taking a bribe, which reflects equal diſgrace on the giver and receiver. [*Exit.*

Dar. This fellow's ſcruples perplex me.—Cruel neceſſity! to be thus dependant on a menial!—But what need I fear! Is not the boy from his native home?—Was he not left in the very centre of Paris?—He probably paſſes his life in ſome religious inſtitution—or perhaps is dead. At all events, how can one in his ſituation give any account

of his origin?—Dupré alone.—I muſt treat him kindly—muſt ſuppreſs my rage when in his preſence—and above all things never loſe ſight of him. Oh wealth, wealth, how many humiliations haſt thou coſt me—how dearly have I paid for the enjoyment of thee!

Enter ST. ALME.

Alme. I obey your ſummons, ſir.

Dar. My ſon, I will once more ſpeak to you—but obſerve me well—if you do not without heſitation accede to my wiſhes—we ſee each other for the laſt time. Where have you ſpent the morning?

Alme. Dear ſir, I am incapable of diſſimulation.—I am juſt come from Count d'Harancour.

Dar.—(*alarmed.*)—How! Without me! What were you doing at his houſe?

Alme. I have opened my whole heart to him—I have acquainted him with my affection for Miſs Franval.

Dar. What! Had you the audacity——

Alme. I know I have acted contrary to your will; but judge, ſir, what influence my attachment muſt have over me, when it can even make the idea of diſpleaſing you inſupportable.

Dar. And what ſaid the Count?

Alme. Oh my father! What a noble exalted ſoul does he poſſeſs!

Dar. What ſaid he? Anſwer me.

Alme I will repeat his exact words: "The connection between you and my daughter would have gratified me much, and have been a conſolation to me in the decline of life; but the choice which you have made is unexceptionable."

Dar.—(*Whoſe rage is*[illegible]—How!

Alme. "The ties by which you are united to ſo amiable a lady muſt be indiſſoluble."

Dar. Indiſſoluble!

Alme. My recital ſeems to make you angry, ſir.

Dar. Proceed, ſir; finiſh it.

Alme.—(*With diffidence and timidity.*)—At laſt he aſſured me that my frank avowal by no means offended him: that he approved of the motives by which I was guided—that he would even exert his influence to obtain your conſent.—Yes, ſir, I hope he will ſoon be here to unite his intreaties with my own.

Dar. And you can even flatter yourſelf with the idea that I ſhall liſten to his entreaties—that I ſhall become the play-thing of your humours?

Alme. My father!

Dar. Was there ever a man more unfortunate than myſelf! I became poſſeſſed—(*he heſitates awhile.*)—of a conſiderable fortune. I

wiſh, by availing myſelf of this, to bring about an alliance between my only ſon, and one of the firſt families in the province. After having ſurmounted every difficulty, and removed every prejudice---an ungrateful boy defeats my plan, and refuſes wealth---rank---conſequence---every thing.

Alme. Of what value are wealth and rank to me?---Of what conſequence is any title but the title of Clementina's huſband?

Dar. Fool! Thou, who canſt deſpiſe this wealth and rank, knowſt not what it coſts to gain them.---(*Seizes his arm, and draws him forward.*)---No, I ſay. Thou knowſt not what it coſts.

Alme. Whatever may have been the ſacrifices by which you obtained your preſent fortune, can they be placed in competition with thoſe which you demand of me? I love—adore Clementina; and now I can alſo add, I am beloved by her.

Dar. How have you learnt this?

Alme. from herſelf.

Dar. And this confeſſion, on the part of a poor and deſigning woman, can make you renounce the ſplendid proſpects which I open to your view?

Alme. Oh my father, wound my heart in every way---do any thing, every thing to counteract me---but ſpare me, I beſeech you, the agony of hearing the idol of my ſoul calumniated---That I cannot bear.---Yes. Clementina has obtained my affection, but not by any deſigning arts. Her enchanting beauty, her numerous virtues, and unexceptionable birth were all the ſnares ſhe uſed.

Dar.---(*For a moment confuſed, and almoſt aſhamed.*)----For the laſt time hear your father's command. You muſt renounce Miſs Franval.

Alme. Rather will I die.

Dar.---(*In a mild tone.*)---My peace of mind depends upon it.

Alme. And my life.

Dar.---(*In a tone of intreaty.*)---Yield to my wiſhes.

Alme. I love and am beloved.

Dar.---(*Embraces him.*)---My ſon, I conjure you——

Alme.---(*Kiſſing his hand.*)---Dear father, I love and am beloved.

Dar.---(*Puſhes him furiouſly away.*)---Enough! Begone.

(Alme *again attempts to kiſs his hand, which he withdraws.*)---Begone I ſay. (*Exit* Alme.

Dar.---(*after a long pauſe.*)---Never ſhall I ſucceed in overpowering ſo violent a paſſion.---This alliance with the daughter of Count d'Harancour would have made my credit equal to my wealth, and would have been a protection againſt every poſſible danger.---It was my deareſt wiſh, my only ambition——Alas! My plan is entirely defeated.

Enter. DUBOIS.

Dub. Mr. Franval requeſts a private interview, Sir.

Dar. Franval, the advocate?

Dub. Yes, Sir.

Dar. Tell him I am not at home, [*Exit* Dub. Doubtleſs he comes to perſuade me that this union with his ſiſter is moſt eligible. Yes, yes. They are all concerned in the plot.—Theſe lawyers of repute think themſelves equal to any one, and I rejoice it is in my power to humble the arrogance of this Franval. He ſhall learn——

Re-enter DUBOIS.

Dub. He has ſent me again, Sir, to inform you that he is accompanied by the Abbé de l'Epée, inſtructor of the deaf and dumb at Paris.

Dar. (*Alarmed.*) The Abbé de l'Epée!

Dub. And that they wiſh to communicate ſeveral circumſtances of the utmoſt importance.

Dar. (*Aside in great confuſion.*) What a ſuſpicion enters my mind! Every thing combines to torture me.

Dub. I wait your commands, Sir.

Dar. (*Endeavouring to ſummon reſolution.*) Let them come. [*Exit* Dub.

Horrible ſuſpicion! I muſt prepare myſelf——What can have brought this celebrated Abbe to Toulouse? —What can he want with me?—Is it poſſible that after the expiration of eight years, in ſpite of every precaution——Alas! Shall I never know a moment's peace? —Ha! They come. Let me be firm.

Enter FRANVAL *and the* ABBE.

Abbe. (*With a bow.*) Mr. Darlemont——

Dar. Be ſeated. You have requeſted a private interview. May I aſk——

Fra. A regard for the father of my friend, and a wiſh to do an act of juſtice bring us hither.

Dar. Explain yourſelf, if you pleaſe.

Abbe. (*Minutely obſerving him.*) I ſhall ſurpriſe you much. Know ſir, that accident, or rather Providence has delivered your nephew Count Solar into my hands.

Dar. is extremely agitated

Fra. Yes, sir, your nephew is alive, and in his name the Abbe de l'Epée now demands his fortune.

Dar. (*Endeavouring to ſuppreſs his fears.*) Julius alive, ſay you?

Abbe. Heaven has rewarded me by preſerving his exiſtence.

Dar. That would be moſt welcome news to me—but alas, it is impoſſible. The young count died at Paris, eight years ago.

Abbe.—(*Keenly rivetting his eyes on him.*)—Are you ſure of that?

Fra. You may have been deceived.

Dar. I myſelf was preſent, and——

Abbe. How! Were you yourſelf preſent when he died?—Did you yourſelf ſee the dead body?

Dar.—(*Embarraſſed.*)—Without replying to your interrogatories, I think it ſufficient if I tell you that the death of Julius Count Solar was, at that time alluded to, legally proved, and rendered indiſputable by a legal document.

Abbe—(*Still obſerving him very minutely*)—That document is falſe—I am at this moment more convinced of it than ever.

Dar. And on what is this conviction founded?

Abbe. Excuſe my frankneſs, on your confuſion. Every thing betrays you, againſt your will.

Dar—(*Riſes*)—Dares any one attach a ſuſpicion—

Abbe.—(*Who alſo riſes as well as* Fra.)—A man, who has ſtudied nature during ſixty years, who has traced all her effects to the very cauſes, which produce them—ſuch a man finds it not difficult to read the human heart.—With my firſt look I diſcovered every thing concealed in your's.

Dar. I have nothing to reproach myſelf with; nor am I bound to give you any account of my conduct. By what right, indeed, and with what pretence do you come hither!

Abbe. By the right of eight years' labour, care and patience; by the right (which every worthy man poſſeſſes) of aſſiſting a fellow-creature in diſtreſs. With what pretentions?—I have but one; it is juſt and I will enforce it. Heaven entruſted Count Solar to me that I might love him, educate him, and avenge him. The will of heaven I have hitherto obeyed, and ſtill obey.

Dar. Avenge him!

Fra. The rights by which I too appear before you are not inferior to his. My firſt incitement is the confidence of this celebrated man, who has fixed on me to complete a work than which none was ever yet more honourable to humanity. My ſecond is the duty which my profeſſion demands, to protect the weak againſt the powerful, and ever aſſiſt the oppreſſed.

Dar. Of what oppreſſion are you pleaſed to ſpeak?

Fra. As to my pretentions, I too have only one. I wiſh to be a mediator between you and the young Count.

Dar. I do not underſtand you.

Fra. Nothing can counteract his claims. If you have been guilty, you may ſtill make reparation. Confide in me, and be aſſured that next to the orphan's intereſt nothing in the world ſhall be more ſacred to me than the honour of my friend's father.

Dar. But once more I aſk, what evidence have you that this young man, for whom you ſo much intereſt yourſelves, is Count Solar? There are many others, who are deaf and dumb.

Fra. Every circumſtance corroborates it.

Abbe. The time at which you took him to Paris was the ſame, at which he was brought to me——

Fra. And the ſame, at which his death was reported here. His age —his natural defects—

Abbe. His ſtriking likeneſs to his late father——

Dar. Likeneſs!

Abbe. His joy and agitation on entering this town, and on ſeeing this palace—

Fra. The diſcovery of a former ſervant—

Abbe. And finally his own declaration.

Dar. His own declaration!

Fra. The ſtatements which he has made with ſo much confidence and certainty—

Dar. Statements!

Abbe. Does this aſtoniſh you?—You fancied it impoſſible, I preſume, that one unfortunately deaf and dumb—

Fra. Know that Julius found in this man a ſecond creator; that, guided by his inſtructions, nouriſhed by his virtues, inſpired by his genius, your nephew has received a complete education. He is acquainted with the paſt as well as the preſent. Nothing eſcapes his memory and penetration. Even you—

Dar.—(*With increaſing embarraſſment.*)—No. Never will I acknowledge this ſtranger. My nephew's death was clearly proved, and I am ready before any court of juſtice to——

Fra. Reflect what you are about.—More than one old judge is ſtill alive, who may eaſily recognize in this youth the features of a man whoſe memory is revered by all Toulouſe. Reflect that every inhabitant of this town will be affected by the young Count's return, and the narrative of all that has been done for him by the philanthropic Abbe. Look at this venerable man; count his grey hairs, and you will count his good actions. Once more, beware of the courts of juſtice. You will be convicted, and branded with infamy for ever.

Dar. Your threats alarm me not; for, even if the legal document were to be declared falſe, the law can only puniſh thoſe who ſigned it.

Fra. But if witneſſes charge you with bribery, and acknowledge

themselves to have been accomplicies in your gilt, think you then to escape punishment? Ha! You shudder.

Abbe. The confession trembles on your lips. Relieve your heart.

Fra. Rid yourself at once of the tortures, which you have so long endured.

Abbe. You know not the satisfaction arrising from a frank confession of an error.

Fra. (Takes one of his hands.) Follow our advice.

Abbe. (Takes the other.) Yield to our entreaties.

Dar. (Tears himself away.) Leave me, leave me. *(Covers his face with both hands.*

Abbe. (Apart to Fra.*)* He is alarmed. Now let us strike the decisive blow. *(Opens the door).*

Enter THEODORE *and* RACHEL.

[Abbe *leads* The. *close to* Dar. *so that when the latter turns, his first look must be on* The.]

Dar. (Aside, while he endeavours to summon resolution.) These two men have so much cunning; so much penetration; but I will brave them. *(Assumes an air of defiance, turns, and espies* The.*)*— Gracious God!—*(Stands rooted to the spot).*

[The. *gazes intently at* Dar. *shrieks, flies into the* Abbe's *arms, and indicates by signs that he recognizes his guardian.*]

Abbe. (After a pause.) Now Sir! Can you still doubt whether this is Count Solar?

Dar. (Most violently agitated) This—my nephew!

Fra. How! Even how do you do——

Dar. If he were Julius—why would he avoid me? Why would he not come to my arms?

Abbe. If he were not Julius, why this alarm when he espied the author of his sufferings? Yes. If any doubt had still remained, this evidence of nature would completely remove it.

Dar. I do not recognize him, and never will, unless legal evidence——

Abbe. You do not recognize him! Why then do you tremble thus?

Dar. Who? I!

Abbe. Whence that involuntary shriek at sight of the young Count?

Fra. And why now avert your face?

Abbe. In vain do you contend against nature.

(The. makes further signs by which he endeavours to describe a child, whose clothes are stripped from his body, and exchanged for rags).

Abbe. My pupil himself assures me that he recollects you; that it was you, who took him to Paris; that it was you who——

Dar. Enough! I am weary of your nonsensical remarks. Away! Leave me all of you.

Fra. (With energetic dignity.) We shall not obey your orders. We are in the place of Count Solar.

Dar. Begone, I say—or dread my fury.

Enter ST. ALME.

Alme. What a strange noise!—Can any one dare to insult my father? What do I see? Franval!

[The. *recognizes* Alme, *and flies with a joyful exclamation into his arms*].

Alme. Who is this young man?

Fra. Your cousin Julius; your father's ward.

Alme. (Delighted.) Is it possible?

Dar. An infamous deception, my son!

Alme. Oh, no, no. It is true that times have altered these features but I feel that my heart—

Dar. An infamous deception, I tell you—a snare laid for us.

Alme. A snare! That I can soon decide. *(Examines* Theodore's *arms, and shows a scar.)* 'Tis he.

Dar. How!

Alme. Yes—'tis he. Look at the wound he obtained in defending my life. 'Tis he my preserver—

[*Embraces* The. *with heart-felt satisfaction.*

Dar. St. Alme, go to your room.

Alme. What! Would you seperate Julius and me so soon?

Dar. Go, or tremble.

Alme. No. I will stay—even if your curse fall upon me at this moment; even if Heaven's lightning blast me on the spot. He was my first friend, the companion of my earliest years. Who can resist the impulse of nature. [*Again clasps* The. *in his arms.*

Dar. *overpowered by shame and fury throws himself into a chair.*]

Abbe. And does not this scene affect you? Can you see all our tears, and be callous? Oh, Sir, how much I pitty you!

Fra. Yield to the power of conviction and corroborating circumstances. Oppose no longer. Your own son—

Alme. Father for heaven's sake——

Dar. Peace! *(To* Abbe *and* Fra.*)* I do not know this young man. Say what you will, produce what proofs you may, I can maintain the validity of a legal document, and my own rights. I insist upon it that you leave my house.

Abbe. (Takes the hand of The.*)* Come then, unfortunate orphan—come, thou weak plant, which the tempest has already bent so low. (The. *observes a tear in his eye, and gently wipes it away.)* Come.

If the law will not avenge thy wtongs; if avarice and ambition drive thee from the habitation of thy fathers, still there is one asylum open to thee; still thou shalt be welcome to the peaceful abode and affectionate heart of De l'Epée!

Alme. (*With reverential astonishment.*) De l'Epée!

[Abbe *draws* The. *after* him. *Both cast a look towards* Dar. *who sits with downcast eyes*].

[Rac. *follows them to the door*].

Fra. (*To* Dar. *after embracing* Alme.) If I have hitherto exercised that forbearance which I thought due to the father of my friend be now assured I will do my duty to its utmost extent, and arm myself with that determination which my abhorrence of your conduct inspires. Whatever may be the shadow of hope, at which you grasp whatever reliance you may place upon your wealth and power, be assured, Mr. Darlemont, you shall not escape me.

[*Exeunt* Fra. Abbe. The. *and* Rac.

Alme. Franvall My friend!— In a few minutes I will be at your house.

Dar. (*aside*) At last they are gone.

Alme. Hear me, my father.

Dar. Away from me!

Alme. It is Julius. Can you still have any doubt?

Dar. Leave me wretch.

Alme. You draw down destruction on us.

Dar. Say rather thou thyself dost this—Madam thy rashness—but I will counteract all they can do— [*Going*

Alme.—(*Falls at his feet and detains him.*)— By every thing sacred I conjure you not to be guided by this foul ambition, the end of which must be inevitable ruin. Resign the fortune, which belongs not to us (*Dar. in vain attempts to tear himself away—fire flashes from his eye*)—Let my inheritance be poverty, but let not my name be dishonored.—hear me my father—You avoid me—you avert your face.—My father! you disgrace us.—(Dar. *furiously releases himself.*)

[*The curtain falls.*

END OF THE FOURTH ACT

ACT V.

Scene,—*The same room as in the second act.*

[FRANVAL *is seated at his desk, and near him* THEODORE *who is reading. The* ABBE *walks to and fro, and appears to be much interested in* FRANVAL'S *employment. Mrs.* FRANVAL *and* CLEMENTINA *are sewing, and* CLEMENTINA *often looks with great uneasiness toward her brother.*]

Cle. Dominick stays long.

Mrs F. As usual.

Fra.—(*Writing*)—I cannot suppress the painful sensation which I experience in drawing out this appeal.

Mrs. F. But I hope son, you have no longer any idea of sparing this Darlemont.

Abbe. He is, indeed, a most abandoned villian. I did not think it possible that he could have withstood our statements, and above all, the sight of his nephew.

Mrs. F. He is a robber, whose punishment cannot be too much hastened.

Fra. You are right—but his son—

Cle. Yes, dear brother. His son certainly excites every one's compassion.

[*Abb. looks with penetrating eyes at* Cle. *and gives her to understand that he suspects her attachment.*]

Fra. (Throws his pen.) His very name almost breaks my heart.

Abbe. I feel the value of the sacrifice you make, but all my hopes rest on you.

Fra. (*Summoning resolution.*) Yes I promise victory to you, and vengeance to your Theodore. Pardon the involuntary agitation of friendship.

Abbe. Pardon it! I admire it. If by the exercise of mercy we could obtain our object, I should be the first to recommend it. But the obdurate Darlemont will yield to nothing but compulsion. The thunder of the law alone can testify him into obedience.

Fra. Yes. He may dread its thunder; for when this appeal has been delivered, nothing can rescue him from infamy.—What will then become of his unfortunate son, whose nice ideas of honour—Oh that

he might yet succeed in convincing Darlemont how dangerous is his situation, and prevail on him to avoid the dreadful consequences.

Mrs. F. The villian will not be convinced, I am certain.

Cle. And why not! If the voice of a father can reclaim an erring son, why may not the voice of such a son operate upon his father's heart.

Abbe. (Observing her.) I am of your opinion, and place very great reliance on this young man.

Enter. ST. ALME.

[*He is extremely dejected, and stands in the back-ground unperceived*].

Fra. (Writing.) Alas! He knows not that the hand which he has so often pressed within his own, is now employed in writing an appeal against his father. (Alme *sighs.*

Abbe. There he is.

Fra. (Springs from his chair.)—Heavens!

Alme. (Approaches with dignity) Franval I come not to complain. What you do is right. There are situations in which friendship must give way to duty.

(Cle. *lets her work fall into her lap, and is much distressed)*

Abbe. Alas, young man, must I, in fulfilling the duty imposed upon me by a heavenly power, wound such a heart as your's? You know not, Sir, how much this hurts my own.

Fra. And judge, St. Alme, what must be my sensations. On one side justice calls me—on another friendship. Whether I obey the former or the latter, every step prepares for me some future sorrow.

Alme. (Taking the hands of Fra. *and the* Abbe.*)* I acknowledge the value of these noble feelings in their full extent—but let me too fulfil the duty which nature dictates. Let me undertake my father's defence.

Fra. Have you any hopes of persuading him too—

Alme. He would not listen to me—but spurned me from him.—Every thing which honour and filial affection could inspire, I have attempted—but no appeal could move him. He insists upon it, that he can prove the death of his ward, and in every other respect preserves a gloomy silence.

(The. *Perceives* Alme *standing with a dejected mien, throws away the book, and clasps him in his arms.)*

Abbe. Does it not almost appear that Theodore understood what you have said, and wishes to console you?

Alme. (*Returning* Theodore's *embrace.*) I have him again—after so long a seperation—Alas! Why must our meeting be embittered by so

many sorrows;—But you are both perfectly convinced that my father is culpable?

Enter DUPREE

Dup. (Without a hat, and in a kind of delirium.)—For heaven's sake—Mr. Darlemout has just informed me—is it possible—the young Count Solar—

Fra. (Points to the Abbe,) Here is the man who has preserved his life.

Dup. O heavens! (*Espies* The.) There he is. I see him again. (The. *hastens towards him with open arms*—Dup. *starts back with horror.*) Alas! he thinks that he only beholds in me the servant who attended him in his childhood. He knows not that I am unworthy of his favour—that I myself was instrumental in depriving him of his inheritance.

Alme. You, Dupree?

(The. *after observing the signs of the* Abbe, *stands for an instant rooted to the spot, then walks away with a look of astonishment and anguish.*]

Dup. But he must also know my agony and penitence—he must allow me to die at his feet.

(*Falls at* Theodore's *feet.*

Fra. (Raises him.) Compose yourself, and tell us.

Alme. He alone attended my father and the Count to Paris.

Fra. (*To* Dup.) This was about eight years ago.

Dup. It was, Sir. On the very evening that we arrived, Mr. Darlemont ordered me to procure some beggar's rags, that he might clothe little Julius in them.

Abbe. And in those rags he was brought to me.

Dup. As soon as this was done, his uncle took him away in a hackney-coach, and returned alone some hours after. I was astonished, and pressed him to account for it, till at length he entrusted me with his confidence, and told me he had now executed a project which he had devised long since, by leaving the young Count to his fate in the middle of Paris.

Alme. (In a faultering voice.) Could my father be guilty of such a base inhuman crime?

Dup. In order to obtain possession of the Count's estates, it was necessary that his death should be legally proved. Two witnesses were wanting for this purpose—the one was our landlord; who, tempted by money——

Alme. (Lays his hand on Dupree's *mouth.)* Wretch! (*After a pause.*) But no. Proceed.

Fra. And the second witness——

Dup. Was myself.

[Abbe *makes* Dupre's *confession known to* The. *by seeming to write a few lines on his left hand, then by shutting his eyes and letting his hand fall on his breast, by which he expresses death.* The. *comprehends him, and looks with abhorrence at* Dup.*)*

Dup. In a few days we left Paris, and, assisted by his false testimony—

Alme. Hold!—I am no longer allowed to doubt—Oh, what torture does a parent's guilt inflict upon his son!—*(Sinks into a chair.)*

Dup. Since that day, my peace of mind never has returned. Heaven is just, and saved the innocent victim. I am ready to make a public confession, and deliver myself into the hands of justice. I know the rigour of the law. I know what punishment awaits me, and willingly submit to it. Happy shall I be, if by my death I make some atonement for my guilt.

Alme (Springs up suddenly.) Yes—it must be so——Follow me unhappy man. *(Draws* Dup. *away.)*

Dup. Do with me what you please.

Dup. (*Detaining* Alme.) St. Alme, whither go you?

Alme. Wherever despair may lead me.

Abbe. Reflects that Theodore——

Alme. The sight of him increases my torment.

Fra. What would you do?

Alme. Avenge him, or die.

Abbe. (Also detaining him.) You are not capable at present.

Alme, Let me go.—my father! my father! *(Tears himself away and rushes out, drawing* Dup. *after him.)*

(Abbe *makes signs, by which he relieves* The. *who was in great distress during the above scene.)*

(Cle. *is extremely dejected, and is still minutely observed by the* Abbe.)

Mrs. F. At last, then, we are acquainted with the villany of this Darlemont.

Fra. To avail himself of a helpless child's defects, to abuse the confidence of a dying friend and relative—I must own the evidence of this old servant was necessary to make such conduct credible.

Mrs. F. And can you still hesitate, son? Will you wait till his wealth and influence counteract your intentions?

Abbe. Allow me also to remark, that Theodore is not the only person to whom I am attached by duty and affection. All the pupils whom I left at Paris, suffer by my absence, and every moment is of value to me.

Fra. Yes—I should be culpable were I to wait any longer. Sign the appeal. (Abbe *and* The. *Sign it.*)

Cle. (*Aside.*)All hopes are at an end, then,

Enter DOMINIC *and* RACHEL.

Mrs. F. So, you are returned at last, Dominic. Well! Have you brught nobody but Rachel with you?

Dom. (*Out of breath.*) It is not my fault—I have run—and enquired—and sought—First we went to the old grooms house—old Peter—but he and his wife went out of town this morning.

Rac. Then we went in search of the coachman's widow ——

Dom. But nobody was at home. The neighbours, however, promised to send them as soon as they returned.

Fra. I hope you conceald our reasons for wanting them.

Dom. Of coarse, of course, sir.

Fra. (*Takes the appeal and his hat.*) Let us go, then, (*To the Abbe.*)—You and your pupil must accompany me.—(*To his mother and sister, the latter of whom is in the greatest distress.*)—Should St. Alme return during our absence, try to console him—you, especially, Clementina. Convince him how much it hurts me to proceed, but a single moment's delay may be injurious to the young Count, by furnishing his opponent with arms against him.—Let us instantly go.—(*Going.*)

Cle. I hear some one on the stairs.

Dom. (*At the door.*) It is Mr. St. Alme.—How wild his looks are!

Enter. ST. ALME *without hat and sword.*

Alme. Friend, Friend!—(*Falls breathless into the arms of* Fra. *who supports him in a chair.* The. *flies to his assistance with heart-felt sympathy. All surround him.*)

Fra. St. Alme! Rouse yourself.

Alme.—(*Scarcely able to speak.*)—My father——

Fra. Explain yourself.

Alme. My father——

Abbe. Pray proceed.

Alme. Overpowered by Dupre's recital—I hastened home—My father had locked himself in his cabinet—I broke open the door— Dupre followed me—told him he had confessed every thing—that he was going to deliver himself as well as his employer into the hands of justice. "I have shared your guilt," said he "you shall share my punishment." This threat alarmed my father much—I availed myself of the decisive moment, and placed the point of my sword to my breast. "Rather than be thus dishonoured, I will die upon the spot," said I. "Instantly will I plunge this sword to my heart, unless you acknowledge my cousin Julius.—My declaration, the infamy which awaited him if still

obſtinate, and the certainty of my death, had at length their effect,---Nature was victorious---my father was moved---and with a trembling hand---wrote theſe lines.---(*Draws a paper from his boſom, and delivers it to* Fra.)

Fra. (*Reads.*)—"I acknowledge the pupil of the Abbé de l'Epée, called Theodore, to be Julius Count Solar, and am ready to replace him in all his rights. Darlemont."

Abbe. (*Takes off his cowl.*)---Almighty God, accept my thanks.---(*Takes the paper from* Fra. *and preſents it to* The.)

Fra. (*to* Alme.)---Oh my friend! of what a burden you relieve my heart!---(*Tears the appeal.*)

[The. *reads the paper---falls at the* Abbé's *feet---kiſſes his hand---ſprings up, tranſported with joy---hangs on* Franval's *neck---then approaches* Alme*---obſerves him attentively---appears to be ſuddenly ſtruck with ſome idea---haſtens to the deſk---and writes a few lines under* Darlemont's *confeſſion.*)

Fra. What means this?

Abbe. I know not.

Alme. He ſeems much agitated.

Cle. Tears drop from his eyes.

[The. *approaches, lays* Alme's *hand upon his heart, and delivers the paper to him.*)

Alme.—(*Reads.*)—"I cannot be happy at the expence of my firſt friend. I give him half my fortune. He muſt not refuſe it. We were uſed in former days to ſhare every thing as brothers.—Our hearts are re-united, and we muſt not forget our former cuſtoms."—Oh heavens!—(*Claſps* The. *in his arms.*)

Abbe. (*Deeply affected.*) I am richly rewarded for every thing that I have done.

Rac. The image of his generous father!—(*To the* Abbe.) May I hope to paſs my remaining days in the young Count's family?

Abbe. Yes good woman—you and all the ſervants who are ſtill alive.

Fra. But on condition, Rachel, that you, like every one here, obſerve a ſacred ſilence as to what has happened.

Alme. Oh why cannot I waſh away the recollection with my blood?—How ſhall I ever bear it?

Abbe. (*With a friendly ſmile, and a glance towards* Cle.) If this young lady would endeavour to eraſe the recollection———

Fra. Nothing can eſcape your penetration.

Mrs. F. You ſurely forget that ſuch an alliance———

Abbe. Will crown the wiſhes of an amiable pair, whoſe happineſs I gladly would promote.

Mrs. F. Indeed, Sir, you of all men in the world are moſt likely

to gain my conſent—for who can witneſs your good actions, and oppoſe your will?

(Abbe *turns to* The. *places one of his hands twice in the other, and ſeems to put a ring on his finger.* The. *joins the hands of* Alme *and* Cle. *then preſſes them to his heart.*)

Cle. What a bliſsful moment! How little did I anticipate it!

Alme. I feel my happineſs—but no one muſt expect I can deſcribe it!

Fra. My feelings can only be equalled by my admiration. (*To the* Abbe.) Generous man, how proud muſt you be of your pupil! compare him as he now ſtands before us, with what he once was, and rejoice in the completion of your work.

Abbe. (*In the midſt of the groupe.*) He has found his home—he again bears the reſpectable name of his anceſtors, and I already ſee him ſurrounded by many, whom he has made happy. I have not a wiſh ungratified. Almighty ruler of the world, ſummon me away as ſoon as it is thy pleaſure to receive me. My bones will reſt in peace; for I have finiſhed my career with a good action.

FINIS.

FALSE SHAME;

A COMEDY,

IN FOUR ACTS,

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN OF

KOTZEBUE.

—*NEWARK*—

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1801.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

FLAXLAND, *a Counſellor of State.*
MRS. FLAXLAND, *his ſecond Wife.*
MINNA, *his Daughter by the firſt Wife.*
EMMA, *an Orphan.*
CAPTAIN ERLACH.
HUGEL, *a Country Gentleman.*
VICOMPTE DE MAILLAC, *an Emigrant.*
FRELON, *his Valet.*
MADAME MOREAU.
JOHN, *the Counſellor's old Gardener.*

[*The Scene is Unchanged, in the Counſellor's Garden—On one ſide of the Stage runs a Paliſadoe fencing a Lawn—on the other ſide ſtand two lofty trees, with the branches intertwined, ſhading a bank of turf.*]

FALSE SHAME.

ACT I.—*SCENE I.*

JOHN, *upon a ſhort ladder, clipping the hedge, humming a ditty and talking at intervals.*

JOHN.

LUXURIANT ſhoots:—here and every where: but they cannot every where be prun'd:—Ho! ho! could I but for once, with my ſheers, go to work pell-mell among the rabble who are feaſting here upon the fat of the land, ſnap! ſnap!—every cut ſhould tell. *(he ſings, then pauſes)*—My poor maſter!—happineſs was once in this garden a perennial ever-green—flouriſhing without labour in each nook: now have they hemm'd my good maſter within ſo cloſe and thick a fence—that not a ſun-beam can penetrate *a cheval de frize*: and the effects upon him is but too apparent, for he waſtes away like a "*viola matronalis*" devoured by inſects. *(he ſings and works.)*

SCENE II. EMMA *croſſes the Stage ſlowly, knitting, and as ſhe paſſes ſays—Good morrow* JOHN.

John. Good morrow, my heart's dear young lady; what ſo early riſen; a thick dew is on the ground, and you will wet your feet.

Emma. The ſun ſhone through my window, the[illegible]ttracted me hither. [*Exit.*

John. (looking after her) a pretty flowret! that hides it[illegible] in the graſs like a rip[illegible]awberry. Heaven preſerve her from the ravenous jack-da[illegible] Our Minna, is alſo good; ay, very good: but ſhe faſhions herſelf rather too much after her ſtep-mother; and it may ſoon be ſaid—ſhe *was* good. *(he ſings and works.)*

SCENE III. *Enter* FRELON.

Frelon. Bon jour, maitre Jean.

John. (pauſes; eyes him; ſmiles contemptuouſly and works on.)

Frelon. (approaches and cries) What ho!

John. What's the matter?

Frelon. I ſay, bon jour, maitre Jean!

John. And I ſay—go to the devil! I am an honeſt old fellow, and muſt be ſpoken to in my mother tongue; do'ſt underſtand, Mounſeer bon jour?

Frelon. Maſter John is forever grumbling.

John. The Cuckoo is *Maitre Jean*—my name is John; keep your diſtance, with your French flim-flams.

Frelon. The aſſes cry—Jahn! Jahn!

John. So I hear.

Frelon. Maitre Jean, ſounds better.

John. All paſſes current with you, if it doth but ſound:—go your ways *Mounſeer* cling-clang, and leave me unſhorn.

Frelon. Sheep are ſhorn, but not bears.

John. Take heed of the bears paws. *(he ſings and works.)*

Frelon. Maitre Jean avec permiſſion, leave off ſinging—you have a cracked voice.

John. Who hinders thee from taking thyſelf off?

Frelon. My maſter ordered me to wait for him here.

John. Then poſt thyſelf yonder among the young peas, that for once in thy life thou may'ſt be good for ſomething.

Frelon. Your jeſts are truly German.

John. Methinks, for German bread, thou may'ſt well digeſt German truiſms.

Frelon. (fanning himſelf) It will be hot to day.

John. There is mud in the pond, where thou may'ſt cool thyſelf.

Frelon. Apropos: the pond muſt be filled up.

John. (ſurpris'd) What?

Frelon. I ſay the pond muſt vaniſh.

John. (ſmiles ſneeringly,—Sings and works.)

Frelon. Only let my maſter ſtrike up a match with the daughter of the houſe, and we ſhall ſoon turn things topſy turvy.

John. Your maſter—with Miſs Minna?

Frelon. Yes, yes, the viſcount is in a fair way to forget what he owes to his illuſtrious anceſtors.

John. So—but Miſs Minna will ſcarcely forget what ſhe owes to herſelf.

Frelon. Mon ami, my maſter is accuſtomed to turn the heads of young girls.

John. Verily, they muſt be turned to endure him.

Frelon. Reſpect—*Maitre Jean*—a word from me, and you fall under my maſter's diſpleaſure.

John. Hey!—

Frelon. At any rate—I have my doubts, whether my maſter will continue your ſervice.

John. So!

Frelon. As to the kitchen garden, you may there perhaps underſtand your buſineſs:—but, *mon ami*, you want taſte.

John. Indeed!

Frelon. Your trees, hedges and tulips—might paſs in Holland,—but ſuit not our taſte;—we require ſtriking proſpects—improviſtos—hermitages—mauſoleums.

John. Now, I have enough of it.

Frelon. You are old, *mon ami*; have ſeen very little of the beautiful; *il faut lui paſſer ſon ignorance*; you may be welcome to continue here as under-gardener; but we ſhall engage a Frenchman—a *ſans pareil, ah! maitre Jean*—you may then become a pupil.

John. I! become a pupil! *(deſcending from the ſteps.)*

Frelon. What is now undermoſt - he will make uppermoſt;—he will improve the muddy pool in Dian's bath—and the down-falling hot-houſe—into a Chineſe Kioſk.

John. Kioſk! Thou contemptible gaſconader (*he ſeizes a water engine, and waters Frelon's legs.*

Frelon. (*jumping about*) *Maitre Jean, Maitre Jean,*—what means all this!

John. Diana's bath—*Mounſeer bonjaur!*

Frelon. I ſay, let me alone.

John. If it does not pleaſe thee—why,—crawl into the Kioſk—(*he follows Frelon about the ſtage.*)

SCENE IV. *The privy Counſellor* FLAXLAND *and the former.*

Flax. John—what art thou doing.

John. I am watering weeds!

Flax. Doſt not know, in whoſe ſervice the fellow is?

John. (*half aſide*) O! yes! as the maſter, ſo the ſervant.

Frelon. (*wiping his legs with his handkerchief*) *Maitre Jean* loves fun.

Flax. Where is your maſter.

Frelon. Moſt likely—yet at the ball.

Flax. (*forceing a ſmile*) Bravo!—That I call dancing.

Frelon. Towards day-break, he ſent me away, and ordered me to wait for him here.

Flax. (*with conſtrained indifference*) the Viſcount will doubtleſs attend my wife home.

Frelon. My maſter knows good breeding.

Flax. Was the ball well kept up.

Frelon. O! yes! your lady dances—*comme un ange, and Mademoiſelle Wilhelmine—comme un zephyr.*

Flax. Was the company numerous?

Freeze. Your lady, was ſeated at midnight in a circle of the [illegible]

Flax. (*expreſſing his indignation*) I hope ſhe will not take cold in returning home.

Freeze. She went back the ſhorter—Chevalier Hugel offered his carriage.

Flax. Hugel! is he in town?—I am glad of it.

Freeze. He arrived laſt night in full gallop—dismounted—and flew to the ball—*ventre ſaint gris—maitre Jean* has ſo drench'd me, that, by your leave, I muſt change my *chauſſure.*

[*He makes a ſlight bow, and goes off.*

SCENE V. *Counſellor* FLAXLAND *and* JOHN.

Flax. Tell me John—I have juſt been down at the Baſin—why are the trees there feſtooned together.

John. It is my lady's order—I had to ſtrip the garden of laylock and gilder roſes.

Flax. But wherefore all this preparation?

John. How ſhould I know?—ſhe is to give a ſomething—the puppy who juſt hopp'd off named it in French. Monſieur Roſat deſcribed it to me—it is called—ha! ha! ha!—a dancing breakfaſt; the cooks have been at work all night; and the maids beating chocolate.

Flax. (*with forced indifference*) So!

John. Ay, ay, for a couple of years there has been ſuch a buſtle in the garden, that the nightengales have quite deſerted it.

Flax. No matter good old man, if contentment only here builds its neſt.

John. Ay, ay, contentment is a pretty bird, but, at times flies away like ſwallows.

Flax. (*ſighs and endeavors to conceal it.*)

John. Be not offended, my dear maſter, I am an old gray headed ſervant, who look'd pleaſly on when you were baptized—you grew up but always lov'd to be alone; when the neighbors' children played, you ſometimes, through good nature, mingled in their ſports—but then you look'd juſt as you do now—you underſtand me.

Flax. (*ſmiling*) If neighbor's children had claims on my good-nature—how much more my dear wife?

John. But often what is eaſy to the lad, is a difficult taſk for the man. The twig bends, the tree breaks. After peaceably and quietly jogging on in the ſame path for the fourth of a century, at the end of the way we are not inclined to practice any ſide ſteps.

Flax. My wife is young; I am turn'd of forty, and therefore ſhould be doubly obliging; *(with warmth)* and ſhe deſerves my fulleſt confidence—ſhe is, indeed, an incomparable woman——

John. Mighty well—if madam would but leave me the garden in peace.

Flax. How ſo, old one—what difficulties does ſhe throw in your way.

John. Ah! my dear maſter, the garden is my paradiſe. My father, God bleſs him, planned the garden; there was I born and bred, and a couple of years excepted, which, through love of the art, I paſſed in Holland, I have ſcarcely moved a ſtep from the gate. My hand has pruned each fruit tree—and what my arms can now ſcarcely ſpan, I remember a tender ſapling. Behind yon meadow is a graſs plat—it is hardly noticed—by the garden wall ſtand a few birch trees, where in the evening I ſmoke my pipe——

Flax. Well!

John. Methought—that a good word to your honor in my behalf—would get your leave to have me buried there.

Flax. That ſhall be done, my honeſt fellow.

John. Ah! but who knows how long theſe birch trees may remain. Madam has many things under conſideration; the wall is to be pulled down, and a plantation is to be made in the meadow, with a labyrinth intermixed with a bit of a cornfield—a Parnaſſus—and I know not what; my poor birch trees will ſtand in the way.

Flax. No one ſhall moleſt thy birch trees.

John. But who will care about ſuch poor wood, when even theſe beautiful linden trees are not ſpared.

Flax. What linden trees?

John. (pointing to the two trees twined together) Do you no longer know your nurſelings? you and Miſs Philippini planted them on your good mother's birth-day.

Flax. Oh! I full well remember it.

John. You were then both children, ſcarcely as tall as this roſe-buſh, and when you had put the cuttings in the ground, you joined hands over them and kiſſed one another. Your lady mother wept, and ſaid to me, John, have a care of theſe ſuckers! this I have faithfully done, they are become a pair of ſtately trees; and muſt I now fell them? no, I cannot do it, the hand would grow nerveleſs that attempted to lay an axe to theſe roots.

Flax. But who wiſhes thee to cut 'em down?

John. Madam ſays, when one ſits in the ſummer houſe,

theſe linden trees ſhut out the proſpect of the village.

Flax. No matter, theſe linden trees ſhall not be touch'd—I eſpecially entruſt them to thee, John.

John. Mighty well!

Flax. It is the ſole remembrance of my poor ſiſter.

John. Alas! Yes!

Flax. My dear wife knew nothing of this.

John. Likely not; it was but yeſterday ſhe firſt mentioned it. I believe the flighty *Mounſeer* puts theſe fancies in her head. He was with her, ſkipping and whirling about her, treading down here cucumber, and there the ripe ſtrawberries. He ſeems to ſtand high in Madam's good graces.

Flax. (*with oppreſſed ſenſibility*) Do'ſt think ſo.

John. He never leaves her ſide.

Flax. He is thought to be an agreeable companion.

John. To be ſure he can prattle, and ſo can his *Mounſeer valet-de-chambre*; he already boaſts of alliances?

Flax. (*eager*) What alliances?

John. I dare not even repeat them, for I do not believe a ſyllable of the *gaſconade.*

Flax. (*aſide*) So! already the ſervants prattle, (*going to ſpeak, but reſtrains himſelf*) Enough, John: I diſturb thee in thy work; I could not ſleep, and thought to be the firſt in the garden.

John. The firſt? oh! no: Miſs Emma was here half an hour ago.

Flax. Emma! where is ſhe?

John. Yonder ſhe ſits, knitting; yonder among the roſe-buſhes.

Flax. (*calling her*) Good-morrow, Emma.

SCENE VI. EMMA, *and the former.*

JOHN *removes further down, clipping his hedge, and gradually diſappears in the back ground.*

Emma. Good-morrow, my dear father, I did not know you were ſo early riſen.

Flax. Thy caſe was mine, and thy tip-toe tread was needleſs; what wilt thou give me if I am the meſſenger of good tidings?

Emma. Give! you joke! To give you would be only to give back, for have I not received all from you?

Flax. From me? nothing my child; thou oweſt me only the roof beneath which thou dwelleſt; every thing elſe, to the laſt penny, is repaid me by my aſtoniſhing friend, from his ſmall ſtipend.

Emma. But can he alſo repay your fatherly affection?

Flax. That, thou amply refundeſt; familiarizing to me

the delightful idea of having two daughters. Indeed, I could almoſt become jealous, by reflecting, that I muſt to-day divide my ſtrongeſt claims upon your heart.

Emma. To-day?

Flax. Erlach is expected.

Emma. Expected? and to-day! my deliverer! my noble benefactor! at length, after eight years: but, my dear father, will he certainly come?

Flax. He writes ſo, as uſual, in three laconic lines. The intelligence ſurpriſed me, for at the beginning of a campaign, Erlach is not accuſtomed to make viſits.

Emma. Scarcely can I recall his figure: O! I would he were here! I will meet him, which road muſt he take?

Flax. No one knows; my worthy Erlach ſeldom adds place or date to his letters; do but read? "Thou wilt receive encloſed Emma's penſion, and next Tueſday myſelf." That's all.

Emma. Sure enough! only a word or two, but ſtampt with kindneſs; his time is too precious for writing; 'tis devoted to action:—is it not ſo dear father? he thinks the hour loſt to him that does not dedicate ſome good deed to eternity.

Flax. The gentle Emma has caught enthuſiaſm! and it pleaſes me.

Emma. O! when he raiſed the wretched Emma from the maſs of ruins; when he ſhared with her his trifle of pay; whenever I think of it I muſt weep—my whole heart is his!

Flax. And deſervedly may'ſt thou ſucceed, dear girl, in curing him of his woman hatred! and, indeed, the more I contemplate thee, the more rational, and the more probable, do I conſider this hope; what thinkeſt thou, Emma? thou knoweſt the diſpoſition of the man—his form alone is forgotten—but that is noble too.

Emma. And were he as ugly as the ſlumbering poet, whom a queen kiſs'd in paſſing; he only uttered the beautiful; Erlach does it.

Flax. Thy gratitude takes ſuch a lofty flight, that her wings ſeem already ſoaring to the regions of love.

Emma. What is love, if not attracted by the good and beautiful.

Flax. Thou art not then diſinclined, thou permitteſt me to perſonate the ſuitor?

Emma. You joke, my dear father, and amuſe yourſelf with my perplexity; but do you know that your jeſt might nouriſh a romantic dream that has long been ſporting in my brain?

Flax. Well, my dear little American, let's hear?

Minna. Why, on a ſummer's eve, I lead from your gate circle, to wander in the avenue of elms, then build I castles in the air: hope to compleat my benefaction, to enliven his old days: but I am playing the fool with my talkativeneſs. Fortunately I just perceive our ball visitors returning home: dearest father, shall I have saved my secret unveil'd; but yonder gold lace shall not dazzle me in disorder. [*Seems ſad.*

Flax. And do they come at last? but not to me! a *defame danſant* engages them homeward.

SCENE VII. MINNA, HUGEL, FLAXLAND.

Minna. Good-morrow, to thee, my ſweet Papa, or ſhould I not rather ſay, good-night, and pillow my cheek to ſleep?

Flax. Art thou fatigued?

Minna. Oh dying!

Flax. Dear Hugel, I ſo much the more rejoice to ſee my good neighbor, as at this ſeaſon I could not expect the pleaſure.

Hugel. You are right, ſir, the country in Spring, furniſhes ſo much occupation—ſo much gratification——

Minna. And what a grateful curteſy, muſt I make you; that you left all behind, to be my partner.

Hugel Could my company be of any value, I might flatter myſelf to have deſerved it.

Minna. Extreme diffidence borders on vanity. Who could have thought, dear papa, that this young Squire, who hitherto lurked in a corner, and looked on when other folks were capering, laſt night, at my high requeſt at length boldly reſolved to ſtand with me the *laſt* couple in a *contre* dance, upon the expreſs condition, only to hand up, and then to retire, if the figure ſeemed too intricate. I conſequently expected nothing leſs, than an aukward ſimpleton, weighing like lead upon my arm, and bungling through right and left; when lo! he footed it along with me like a pupil of Vestris. In the name of wonder—why have you hitherto ſeemed as if you were lame?

Hugel. I never danced in a public ball-room; the townſmen enjoy a laugh againſt us ruſtics.

Flax. Falſe ſhame was the only failing I could ever diſcover in my young friend.

Minna. I have not yet finiſhed papa. He ſat next me at ſupper, I filled him bumpers, and was very attentive to him. Whether inſpired by wine, or my ſmiles—the dumb Squire Hugel became eloquent, converſed ſo ſenſibly, and ſported ſuch engaging *bon mots*, that I almoſt forgot that I was in the temple of folly. But in heaven's name, why, Sir! hitherto, have you been ſo ſparing of your words?

Hugel. Becauſe I am apt to utter ſome abſurdities in large circles.

Minna. For this very reaſon—we have large circles, that every one may play the fool with impunity. What in a ſelect company, is becoming diffidence, would in the world be called falſe ſhame; there your apparel muſt be ſplendid, and your diſcourſe dazzling: at home we require comfort from cloathing, and good ſenſe from converſation.

Flax. (*who for ſome moments ſeemed reſtleſs and uneaſy*) Where didſt thou leave thy mother?

Minna. She ſuppoſed you was ſtill in bed, and haſtened to your chamber to awaken you with a kiſs.

Flax. Was ſhe alone?

Minna. Alone! O dear! as if one could ſhake off the Viſcount de Maillac, without telling him to go to the gallows.

Flax. He was then with her?

Minna. Not preciſely with her, but behind her. When they perceive papa is not above, they will of courſe come down into the garden.

Flax. Quite right; for, lo! yonder they are. (*his countenance brightens, and he haſtens to meet his wife.*)

SCENE VIII. MRS. FLAXLAND, VISCOUNT DE MAILLAC, *and the former.*

Maillac. Nous voilla, Monſieur le Conſeiller.

Flax. Good-morrow, my love! haſt thou been well amuſed?

Mrs. Flax. Tolerably, my dear; I met a couple of my youthful friends, whom I had not ſeen for an age; we laughed and prattled. They greet thee kindly, and begged thou wilt not be offended at their having ſo long detained me.

Flax. Offended! what gives thee pleaſure, makes me happy.

Maillac. Bravo, Monſieur le Conſeiller! vivent les maris raiſonables.

Mrs. Flax. Haſt thou miſſed me, my dear?

Flax. My heart always miſſes thee.

Maillac. Very gallant, quite a French *tournure.*

Mrs. Flax. Therefore I will remain with thee the whole day. I have invited ſome twenty friends, we will breakfaſt in the grove and fancy ourſelves in Pyrmont.

Maillac. Ha! ha! ha! bravo! *Madame le Conſeiller* has charming ideas.

Mrs. Flax. (*curteſies*) My ideas are highly obliged to you.

Maillac. Faith, *Meſdames*, I entered Germany with very moderate expectations; I had imbibed a frightful idea of Ger-

man ladies. It was ſaid, a girl of fifteen bluſhed, through timidity, in taking off her glove, and at table thruſt her hands under it; ſitting by the ſide of a man of faſhion, with a dumb and vacant countenance, or elſe unmannerly laughing, grimacing and whiſpering to her play-fellows; a girl of eighteen has ever tearful eyes, is plunged into an ocean of ſenſibility; affects a partiality, and conſtrues rudeneſs to a ſtranger into conſtancy to a lover. A woman of twenty imagines ſhe diſplays her virtue, in drawing back, like a child, whenever a young man approaches her, and pouts if he utters any thing galliant. A woman of twenty five——

Mrs. Flax. Enough, Viſcount, elſe we ſhall diſpatch you to Hanover, to the man who has written a ſatirical book againſt our ſex.

Maillac. I will write an Encyclopedia againſt him, and ſhould I ever return to my country, woe to the prater who ſports a *bon mot* on the German ladies.

Minna. And, as a reward, the German maidens ſhould ſpeedily convey you to the grave, as the female's poet laureat.

Maillac. It may, to be ſure, be alledged, that good-breeding in Germany, was firſt introduced by the French Emigrants, and that afterwards, the revolution, which in the ſouth cauſed ſo much calamity, has carried to the north, taſte and cultivation.

Minna. You are right, Viſcount: a vulgar German girl would laugh in your face; but I, who already feel the benign influence of your ſociety, am ſo well bred as to make you a courteſy—and run off. [*Exit.*

Maillac. Ha! ha! ha! bravo!

Mrs. Flax. (*calling after her*) Whither Minna?

Minna. (*turning to the ſtage*) O! I am impatient to ſee Emma, and relate my adventures. The greateſt delight which a girl can bring home from a ball, is the prating about it for eight days after. [*Exit.*

Maillac. (*exclaims, and touches his ſhoulder*) What was that? a drop of rain!

Mrs. Flax. O! no, the ſky is clear, and will not interrupt our garden gala.

Maillac. But yet, do but ſee a wet ſpot upon my new frock.

Mrs. Flax. Perhaps a dew drop, from the trees?

Maillac. Madam—you yeſterday pronounced ſentence of death upon theſe curſed tall linden trees.

Flax. My dear Emily, I implore mercy for theſe trees?

Mrs. Flax. Are they intereſting to thee?

Flax. Inexpreſſibly ſo.

Mrs Flax. I did not know it.

Flax. My poor ſiſter and I planted them.

Mrs. Flax. (*aſtoniſhed*) Thy ſiſter! haſt thou yet a ſiſter?

Flax. I had one; but whether ſhe ſurvives, God knows!

Mrs. Flax. And thou never ſaidſt a word to me about it.

Flax. Your pardon;—I dreaded the tearing open old wounds.

Mrs. Flax. Neither did I ever hear it mentioned in thy family.

Flax. My Family, through falſe ſhame, avoids uttering my poor ſiſter's name. She loved, againſt her parents' approbation, a young merchant from Lyons—ſhe yielded—and abſconded—For two and twenty years ſhe has been dead to us—moſt of my family have forgotten her—I will never forget her!

Maillac. Lyon! Lyon! I was born in that neighbourhood. Ay, ay, the Lyoneſe are very ſeducing.

Mrs. Flax. (*careſſing her husband*) My dear huſband, I was on the point of doing a very fooliſh thing—but it was an omiſſion on your part, not to have entruſted me ſooner with ſo many important family occurrences—from this moment, theſe linden trees are under my ſpecial protection;—Viſcount, I beg your frock's pardon.

Maillac. But ſeriouſly—I muſt change my dreſs.

Mrs. Flax. (*ſmiling and patting him on the ſhoulder*) What could be more agreeable to us women, than ſuch noble occupation; my toilet alſo awaits me.

Flax. May I offer thee my arm?

Maillac. Fie, Counſellor Flaxland; [illegible] were two Germanic—permit me, (*preſenting his ar*[illegible]

Mrs. Flax. Viſcount I have [illegible] yet been long enough your pupil—the German wi[illegible]y now and then twitches my gown. (*She takes hold of her husband's arm.*) *A revoir Meſſieurs.* (*going*) I ſhall ſoon rejoin you. [*Exit.*

SCENE IX. *The* VISCOUNT, *and* HUGEL.

Maillac. Bravo! an original German joke.

Hugel. I pity the French—if ſuch actions conſtitute their jokes.

Maillac. What elſe?—matter for *Floriand's Nouvelles*; or *Arnaud's eſpreuves du ſentiment.*

Hugel. (*ſhrugs piteouſly his ſhoulders.*)

Maillac. You ſhrug your ſhoulders, Sir—I muſt tell you—your manners diſpleaſe me.

Hugel. I am ſorry for it.

Maillac. We talk—we relate—we diſplay our wit, but all in vain ; there you ſit ; looking like the deaf and dumb, going for the firſt time, to Abbe D'Epeés ſeminary.

Hugel. I had rather reſemble the unlearned ſcholar, than the uninvited tutor.

Maillac. But this muſt not be, Sir : at your age, with your figure, one may daſh at any thing ; you have beautiful teeth, you ſhould laugh; you have large eyes, you ſhould ogle ; you are well made, but you know not how to give your body thoſe bewitching careleſs contours which captivate the ſex ; the undulating line is the line of beauty ; a young man ſhould always diſplay his lineation, with his arms, his legs, his whole body.

Hugel. (*ſmiling*) Unluckily I have been educated in the Cadet corps.

Maillac. Yes, yes : that is evident ; it will be an arduous taſk to unbend you : *en attendant, mon cher ami,*—if you will entruſt yourſelf to my tuition.

Hugel. You honor me.

Maillac. But under one condition.

Hugel. What is it ?

Maillac. I think I have obſerved you caſt a preſuming eye upon Miſs Flaxland.

Hugel. Preſuming ; why yes ; it is, to be ſure, preſuming to love ſuch an enchanting girl.

Maillac. You love her then ?

Hugel. I am not aſhamed loudly to acknowledge the nobleſt feeling of my he[illegible]

Maillac. And [illegible]r ?

Hugel. I know no[illegible] by what title—

Maillac. What title ? [illegible]*bleu* ; I will marry the lady.

Hugel. Why, ſo will I.

Maillac. She is rich ; handſome ;

Hugel. She is good, ſenſible and amiable.

Maillac. I will make her a Viſcounteſs.

Hugel. And I, Mrs. Hugel.

Maillac. She cannot be both.

Hugel. Probably, ſhe may decline being either.

Maillac. *Entre nous, mon cher ami, parlons raiſon.*

Hugel. Willingly, if it does not incommode you.

Maillac. Minna muſt be my bride.

Hugel. I would enter the liſts for ſuch a lovely prize.

Maillac. What, when I tell you that I will not afterwards lay the leaſt reſtraint upon her.

Hugel. What mean you by that?

Maillac. *Au contraire*—you will oblige me in becoming my wife's *cecisbeo.*

Hugel. I have not learnt this in the Cadet corps.

Maillac. Love, Sir, languiſh, as much as you pleaſe, I do not even require your patience for the honey-moon—*l'ami de la maiſon* will be ever welcome.

Hugel. Your moſt obliged.

Maillac. But till after the wedding, I muſt entreat you to keep your diſtance.

Hugel. I am ſorry that my refractory heart—

Maillac. But Sir; I entreat!—do you underſtand me? the tone in which I entreat, will fully explain to you, what impreſſion a refuſal muſt make upon me.

Hugel. The path of love is open, like the career of honor; we may march abreaſt; and he, who like you, Viſcount, is conſcious of his ſuperior merit; what has he to fear?—

Maillac (*diſdainfully*) To fear!-O! no; but this happens to be now my fancy; I will not endure my rival.

Hugel. But for this time you will permit—

Maillac. No; I permit nothing Sir; nothing!

Hugel. That ſounds ſomewhat dictatorial.

Maillac. You compel me to ſpeak plainly.

Hugel. Miſs Flaxland can beſt decide this conteſt.

Maillac. I accept no lady for arbitrator, whilſt I wear a ſword.

Hugel. I am not fond of knight-errantry.

Maillac. [illegible] *pour vous*; for we muſt break a lance together.

Hugel. [illegible]ve long [illegible]down my ſabre into the peaceful ſickle.

Maillac. [illegible]ould ſo much the more adviſe you to make your exit from [illegible]ſtage, where your part cannot be the moſt ſhining.

Hugel. Com[illegible]ion does not always prove an unpleaſant character.

Maillac. You th[illegible]erſiſt in your obſtinacy.

Hugel. (*ſhrugs his [illegible]ulders*)

Maillac. When I peremptorily announce to you, that we muſt cut each other's throat.

Hugel. I hope not.

Maillac. You muſt ſhut out hope.

Hugel. I conſider all this exordium as a jeſt.

I have exiſted of late, like the wandering Jew: But above all, I cannot endure, when friends are forever ſcribbling each other their proteſtations of eternal friendſhip;—it muſt be ſelf underſtood—for a friend is not like a girl, ador'd to day—neglected to-morrow;—apropos of girls—how fares it with my Emma? is ſhe bravely grown?

John. Tall, good, and beautiful—a roſe—a double roſe!

Erlach. I am glad of it;—here is company I perceive.

John. Yes, to my ſorrow.

Erlach. Thou doſt not like it old one?

John. Am not accuſtom'd to it.

Erlach. And thy maſter? neither was it his cuſtom.

John. Ah me! here has been a great alteration.

Erlach. How ſo?

John. Our new lady.

Erlach. What? a new lady! it is not ſurely ſo? —a ſecond wedding?

John. Not know that!—why 'tis going into the third year—

Erlach. Indeed!—it is an unpleaſant hearing—and he is deceived—it ſerves him right.

John. A good lady—but too gay—too frolickſome—it ſeems to me like two kings in one hive—ſuch humming, buzzing, and ſwarming.

Erlach. Let the Counſellor know I am here—but ſecretly—that it may not be mouthed about.

John. I underſtand you. [*Exit.*

SCENE III. ERLACH *ſolus.*

Fares it then with marrying as with drinking—a debauch creates head-ache, and ſcarcely ſober, we again take the glaſs:—No, Erlach, thou haſt done many a crazy thing in thy life-time—but thou wilt not marry—that is not thy doom:—He who ſtands on the beach, beholds the ſwimmers exhauſt themſelves—yet plunges into the flood—and deſerves his fate.

SCENE IV. ERLACH *and the* COUNSELLOR.

Flax. (ſprings to him with open arms) Erlach! my Erlach! *(the two friends preſs each other in ſilence to their hearts.)*

Erlach. (with ſenſibility) Old youngſter! it joys me to ſee thee again: *(he ſhakes him by the hand)* I am truly glad!—thou art become rather thinner, but otherwiſe much the ſame: why, I believe thou weepeſt—fie for ſhame. *(he turns away to conceal his own tears)* hem! a fly makes my eye water.

Flax. I weep!—yes:—and thank thee for not joining the company, for there I muſt have ſuppreſſed theſe ſweet tears.

Erlach. So—but why haſt thou ſuch aſſemblies ?—it diſpleaſes me.

Flax. Of that hereafter ;—let them dance and play—we have not met theſe eight years—dear Erlach, how fare you ?

Erlach. I retire as Captain.

Flax. Why ſo ?

Erlach. Becauſe it no longer pleaſed me—and becauſe an old aunt had the ſenſe to make me her heir.

Flax. I am glad of it—now we ſhall keep together.

Erlach. Truly—that was my intention ;—but ——

Flax. Wherefore a but ?

Erlach. Thou haſt ventured upon a ſecond marriage as I underſtand.

Flax. An excellent woman !

Erlach. May be : yet this ſtyle of living—thou knoweſt me ; it is not after my way.

Flax. Doſt think it is agreeable to me ?

Erlach. Why doſt thou ſuffer what thou couldſt prevent ?

Flax. I am twenty years older than my wife—ſhould I check her accuſtomed youthful amuſements ?

Erlach. Thou ſhould'ſt have taken that ſooner into conſideration.

Flax. I lov'd.

Erlach. If thou preacheſt of love, I have done.

Flax. Has Erlach never acknowledged a miſtreſs ?

Erlach. Friend, it is with love, as with the ſmall pox—who eſcapes it in youth, is ſeldom or ever infected.

Flax. (ſmiling) But when caught it is the more dangerous : —tho' to be ſerious—in thy preſent ſituation, what could'ſt thou do more ſenſibly than to marry ?

Erlach. What ? why ſhoot myſelf—that were more rational.

Flax. What, ever the inveterate woman hater ?

Erlach. If the woman is worthleſs, it is bad ; and if good, it is ſtill worſe.

Flax. Thou art in jeſt ?

Erlach. Not in the leaſt—I ſhould love an amiable woman.

Flax. So much the better.

Erlach. So much the worſe :—a man who loves his wife, becomes the ſlave of his own heart ; her deſires, which he may not be able to gratify, torment him more than her.

Flax. An amiable woman cheriſhes no ſuch deſires.

Erlach. But deſires are like duſt, that inſinuates itſelf thro' bolts and locks.

Flax. And by the breath of love is blown away.

Erlach. Item—who takes unto himſelf a wife, muſt wean

himſelf from an hundred little habits; which, ſince ten years, have become a ſecond nature, and to which mankind generally adhere more obſtinately, than either to their virtues or vices:—every one has his favorite diſh; the chair he prefers ſitting upon; his place at table, and ſo forth:—ſuddenly appears a female, as the houſehold legiſlatrix, and every thing muſt be moulded into another ſhape—the man wiſhes to dine on roaſt beef; but to pleaſe the madam it muſt be fricaſſeed—the carriage is ordered, when he would rather be on horſeback; and he abſtains from tobacco, becauſe ſhe diſlikes the ſmell.

Flax. (ſmiling) Trifles!

Erlach. Saplings have their roots—which on all ſides expand themſelves in the ſoil; and at my years a man diſlikes tearing up a flower, and even were it a weed.

Flax. At thy years! why man—thou ſtandeſt as yet with at leaſt one foot in thy youthful luſtre.

Erlach. But let us finally bring the dear creature to her ſick bed—ſhe has head-aches, I tremble; no appetite, nor I neither; a fever, I am beſides myſelf—and at length, a lying in; I am expiring thro' anxiety. No brother, this is not my calling.

Flax. But haſt thou no conception of wedded bliſs?

Erlach. O! yes:—thou lookeſt the picture of connubial bliſs! and doſt thou not include yonder tumultuous revelry in thy catalogue of wedded joys?

Flax. (with a ſigh) That might be otherwiſe, and peradventure may be otherwiſe!

Erlach. Prithee ſay, where does the ſhoe pinch thee?

Flax. Ah! dear Erlach, more than one worm is gnawing at my heart.

Erlach. Speak the truth; this manner of life: thou loveſt quiet; thou would'ſt rather retire to thy farm?

Flax. Thro' love to my wife, I would roam from one carneval to the other; but the expence is too great; my purſe cannot hold it out.

Erlach. Why doſt thou not tell her ſo?

Flax. I cannot; under her parental roof, ſhe was accuſtomed to this life; when a bride, ſhe enquired with the moſt endearing confidence, the extent of my income: I will moſt cheerfully accomodate myſelf; anſwer me ſincerely?

Erlach. And didſt thou not do it?

Flax. I! excuſe me, my friend; I was aſhamed! live as heretofore, I replied, the means ſhall never fail you.

Erlach. And ſo it reſted?

Flax. She desired to know the conduct she should adopt! whether retirement was my object!—I shall conform entirely to your wishes, said she.

Erlach. But thou?

Flax. I could not bring myself to be, as it were, a kind of dictator, to constrain her. I studied to make her avoid recollecting, that she married a man turned of forty.

Erlach. That implies; thou wast ashamed of thy age.

Flax. May be.—

Erlach. And wouldst pass for a richer man, than thou art?

Flax. It is now too late to retract.

Erlach. Good sense, comes never too late—tho' she knocks at midnight.

Flax. That yet might pass—my heart disregards a diminished revenue—but—

Erlach. Yet a but:—

Flax. To thee, and to thee alone, I confess my weakness—I am tortured by the demon of jealousy; daily, must I behold a swarm of admirers fluttering around her; they are to be sure, mere foplings; but woe betide the man who imagines a fop connot distress him; the necessity of amusement, has often made female virtue fall the victim of amusement.

Erlach. Why dost thou not tell her so?

Flax. It is true, she has an hundred times enquired whether I also was jealous; one word, and I shall disperse all these butterflies.

Erlach. And an hundred times, thou hast answered her.

Flax. What I heretofore answered her, as bridegroom; that my confidence in her, was boundless.

Erlach. That is again, in other words, confessing, thou wast ashamed of thy jealousy.

Flax. Yes, dear Erlach.

Erlach. Now is not false shame a damnable weakness; there would not be half so many miserables, could we but be persuaded, had we but the resolution, to declare ingeneously, where the pain lies. Here now stands a man, who might be happy, whose wife requires nothing more than confidence; she wishes to be guided by him; will renounce whatever displeases him; but he, he is ashamed, and holds his tongue.

Flax. I feel my error; but want the resolution to amend.

Erlach. I must then occasionally lend thee some of my old bachelor frankness; be comforted! if thy wife resembles thy description of her, there may be help for thee; that is my affair: now tell me how fares my little foundling? must I look for her in yonder circle?

Flax. Thou would'ſt ſeek her there in vain.

Erlach. I am glad of it; between ourſelves brother, I have at heart the child's welfare; would ſhe were but grown.

Flax. O! that ſhe is already.

Erlach. And that ſhe were marriageable.

Flax. O that ſhe is any day.

Erlach. You joke; ſhe was a mere child, not taller than my rattan, when I was laſt here.

Flax. But in eight years it is eaſy to grow.

Erlach. Surely; but the laſs is yet blood young; deſtiny threw the poor orphan in my way, and I will faithfully provide for her; I have neither child nor family; ſhe ſhall call me papa, as heretofore; and when old Nick makes me lead down death's dance, I ſhall leave my purſe to her keeping.

Flax. Haſt thou diſcovered nothing of her origin?

Erlach. Not a ſyllable: but no matter; I can be as good a father to her as another.

Flax. Why not rather her huſband.

Erlach. Art thou in thy ſenſes? [bride.

Flax. She ſo heartily rejoiced at thy arrival; almoſt like a

Erlach. Ay, ay, did ſhe ſo? then be quick; ſend her to me.

Flax. Inſtantly, *(going)* thou haſt ſent thy baggage to my houſe?

Erlach. Not yet brother; thou knoweſt me; I muſt firſt find out if all goes here as I like it.

Flax. My old friend; I cannot imagine——

Erlach. Go, go, all that will find its own way.

[*Exit Flaxland.*

SCENE V. ERLACH *ſolus.*

We muſt firſt develope the lady's diſpoſition; matrimony has many a time adminiſtered an opiate to friendſhip; and once fallen aſleep, ſhe awakes never more: it is, as if love exhauſted the ſpirit from the flaſk; leaving friendſhip only the vapour; from which evil, the lord deliver us: my poor Flaxland; and thou perſuadeſt me to marry; thou! a decoy bird; ſing as thou liſteſt, we ſhun the net and the lime twig

SCENE VI. ERLACH *and* EMMA.

Emma. (breathleſs and with outſtretched arms) My deliverer! my benefactor!

Erlach. (draws back and avoids her embrace, ſurprized) Who are you?

Emma. Have you forgotten your Emma?

Erlach. (aſtoniſhed) You! my Emma?

Emma. And why not *thou* as formerly?

Erlach. Can you be the identical Emma, who eight years ſince was not taller than my cane?

Emma. And who could only then liſp, what ſhe now feels.

Erlach. Who ſat upon my knee, and was afraid of my beard?

Emma. The ſame, whom you overwhelm with kindneſs; and yet repel her grateful exultation.

Erlach. (*heſitating between doubt and affection*) Well, well; if it be ſo, I am heartily glad—thou—you—hang ceremony, and run and kiſs my dear girl.

Emma. That, was the fatherly well-known voice. (*ſhe embraces him.*)

Erlach. (*kiſſes her forehead, and contemplates her with admiration*) Why, girl, thou art become tall and beautiful; thy eyes is tender, and all thy ways delight me; doſt ſee? I cannot tell how folks feel who have children, but at this moment, I would not give a doit for a living daughter (*he touches her cheek*) my heart is ſo light and joyful; do not laugh at me, for letting the water trickle down my cheek; this is not uſual with me.

Emma. I laugh! I am ſo overcome. (*weeping*)

Erlach. Thou weepeſt! dear Emma, I cannot ſtand this; I muſt go.

Emma. (*dries up her tears and ſmiles.*)

Erlach. So, ſo, my lovely girl, with ſuch a ſmile thou could'ſt halt a ſquadron on full charge; but now for a rational word, it cannot go on thus; thou and thee are no longer fitting.

Emma. Why not my father.

Erlach. But hang it, why your *father?* do I then look ſo old? I am eight years younger than the Counſellor.——

Emma. Your bounties.

Erlach. What again? (*quick*) Do you hear, dear Emma? (*gentle*) my good Emma, not a ſyllable more about it, it is not my way; and if it muſt be thee and thou, it may as well be as thy brother; at any rate a half brother, by a firſt marriage.

Emma. My heart does not require any relationſhip to love you.

Erlach. So much the better, little comes of relations who only love one another for what little they can get.

Emma. You wrote us ſo ſeldom.

Erlach. My writing maſter rap'd my knuckles when I made crooked letters, and I have ſince been always averſe to writing.

Emma. Your goodneſs!

Erlach. That is not the queſtion; I could but ſparingly provide for thee, for I had nothing beyond my lieutenant's pay, but I ſhall go better in future:—we have inherited, my Emma—an old aunt, God bleſs her, has bequeathed us a pretty

ſnug eſtate; I have therefore retired from the ſervice, and purpoſed taking my winter quarters here with you.

Emma. O! that is delightful.

Erlach. Yes, but the ſtyle of living here is not after my fashion, if it goes on at this rate every day. It is true, the Counſellor has told me that my Emma diſlikes this buſtle.

Emma. Cuſtom has made ſolitude dear to me.

Erlach. Cuſtom only! —not then inclination, not impulſe?

Emma. Do not therefore think the worſe of a young girl, whoſe heart ſometimes throbb'd, when viewing at a diſtance the jocund crew.

Erlach. Well, why didſt thou not make one amongſt them?

Emma. Becauſe it did not become me; becauſe I, a poor orphan, muſt ſubſiſt by others liberality; becauſe——

Erlach. Becauſe, well, fully out with it.

Emma. Before you, I will not conceal my weakneſs: becauſe I could not flatter myſelf in ſplendid circles to ſupply through innate worth, the ſuperiority of my companions in dazzling finery.

Erlach. In plain words, that ſignifies, thou waſt aſhamed of thy wardrobe.

Emma. Not here, not in the ſociety of ſuperior beings, but yonder—you know on what weak foundations the world grounds its fickle judgment.

Erlach. Another inſtance of falſe ſhame. Dear Emma, a maiden is richly dreſt, when adorned in the ſimple drapery of innocence; but thou muſt not want for any thing—now I like ſuch an apron with pockets, it looks ſo domeſtic; but the pockets muſt not be empty. *(he endeavors unobſerved to put a purſe in her pocket.)*

Emma. (much confuſed) No, no! in God's name, not ſo; you have miſunderſtood me; you humble me; I have more than I want. If you love me take back the money.

Erlach. Be but quiet, *(he replaces the money)* I have not managed this cleverly—pardon me, I am too downright—the art of giving is a fine art, and unfortunately I do not underſtand it.

Emma. What I meant to confeſs as a weakneſs, wears the appearance of effrontery. I am conſidered in this houſe rather as a daughter or a ſiſter; how often have they endeavored to force upon me trinkets and fine dreſſes; but it becomes me not, I may ſtill perhaps have parents, pining in poverty, whilſt I am revelling in ſatin—I am perchance but a common peaſant girl, and ſhall brilliants glitter in my ears?

Erlach. A peaſant girl! no indeed, no!

Emma. (*eager and anxious*) Know you, perchance, any thing of my origin?

Erlach. Nothing, dear child, only vague ſurmiſes.

Emma. O! relate to me theſe ſurmiſes—the tale of my deliverance: when you quitted us eight years ſince, I was a child, and could not underſtand it; it is true, that afterwards the Counſellor has often related to me what he learnt from you; but the little local incidents, which can only intereſt me, eſcaped his attention; and how often a trifle is a clue to the moſt important diſcoveries! I will aſſiſt you with my faint infantine recollections; I will deſcribe to you my mother's figure—perhaps ſhe yet ſurvives! Gracious God, ſhe may ſtill be alive!——

Erlach. Poſſibly!—but not probably!—we made good our landing in the night; ſurpriſed Charleſton; our people were diſguis'd by liquor—they became incend[illegible]; the town flam'd at every corner—and thoſe who ſprun[illegible]n the fire, fell by the bayonet!—no commander; no ſubo[illegible]rmation. I think with horror on that infernal night; I had ſhouted myſelf hoarſe—tho' the thunder would have roll'd unheard—At length the day dawned; and enlightened the murd'rous ſcene; covered with duſt and blood— blackened by ſmoke and aſhes—our men laid ſnoring around, all was horror, and in that ſtillneſs of deſolation, I ſcrambled ſword in hand over the ſmoaking ruins; when ſuddenly I heard a faint murmuring under my feet; I liſtened—I removed away the glowing fragments; when an infant countenance looked piteouſly at me; and cried mother! mother! it was thou, deareſt Emma! thy body laid half buried in ſoot; a miracle had preſerved thy exiſtence; I looſen'd the ſoot, one of thy little hands got free, and thy firſt uſe of it was to waft [illegible] kiſs; this inexpreſſibly affected me. Patience, poor worm, ſaid I; thou mayeſt yet be relieved, my groom was near, and together we rail'd thee unhurt into the face of day; [illegible] took thee in my arms, and thou clung around my neck [illegible] my mother! ſaidſt thou in Engliſh, to my mother! thou repeatedſt in French, and at laſt in German; becauſe [illegible]u thoughteſt I did not underſtand thee. Who is thy mother? I enquired, here in the narrow ſtreet, the good woman, at the yellow houſe. But there were no more; neither narrow or broad ſtreets, neither woman or houſe; I exerted every effort to make ſome diſcovery; the few who had ſaved themſelves had crawled into the woods; we re-embark'd; what was to be done? could I abandon thee among the burning ruins? My captain permi ted my taking thee with me; he was mov'd when he beheld thee; for thou

waſt ſo little ; ſo little ; that I cannot even now comprehend how thou couldeſt grow thus tall.

Emma. Alas ! and do you not know more ?

Erlach. (*ſhrugs his ſhoulders*) We made a ſafe voyage to Europe ; and thou foundeſt an aſylum in my friend's houſe.

Emma. Could I not once liſp out to you my name ?

Erlach. Thy chriſtian name, Emma ; which makes me think thee Britiſh ; but thy French and German were equally correct ; thou art therefore of no vulgar origin ; thy linen was mark'd A. M. and this is all I know.

Emma. O ! would I were once there ! could I but view my parents ? I ſhould certainly recognize them ; my father was a dark thin man ; and my mother ! her form I never can forget ; ſhe look'd ſo pale ; and wept ſo frequently ; and now, perhaps, ſhe weeps oftener than ever ; and I dare not mingle my tears with he[illegible]

Erlach. [illegible]oſe thyſelf dear Emma ; I ſee the holiday ſquadron p[illegible]ing down the alley ; ſuch tears are too precious for creatures who have whirl'd away their bit of feeling in the dance.

Emma. I cannot juſt now recover myſelf, but ſuffer me to go ?(*ſhe retires*)

Erlach. (*alone*) Excellent girl ! only a pity, that ſhe has grown ſo tall and handſome : the heart cannot be ſo unreſerved as formerly, and—thou faints on the tongue ; I will, however, remove my trunk hither.

SCENE VII. ERLACH, MRS. FLAXLAND, MINNA, HUGEL *and* EMMA.

Mrs. Flax. Welcome Captain ; heartily welcome ! I juſt now underſtand from m[illegible]uſband——

Erlach. (*with cool politeſſ*) Have I the honor to be in Mrs. Flaxland's p[illegible]ence ?

Mrs. Flax. If it does not g[illegible] you more ſatisfaction than honor—I muſt count another [illegible]ungratified.

Maillac. Bravo ! that is fi[illegible]

Erlach. Your wiſhes are very t[illegible]rate.

Mrs. Flax. We have been expe[illegible]ng you for an eternity.

Erlach. So much the worſe for me—for the expected ſeldom anſwer the expectation.

Mrs. Flax. I have an hundred times had your manner and appearance repeated to me—for when I hear of intereſting perſons, I love to ſketch an outline, which at laſt ſeldom reſembles the original : for example, I have always figur'd you to

be a lively, jovial man, with the noſe of an eagle, and the eye of a falcon.——

Erlach. Your moſt obedient.

Mrs. Flax. I would have wager'd Wieland's Muſarion, your eyes were not of ſuch a dark hazel.

Maillac. Ha! ha! ha!—bravo!——

Erlach. A cheerful ſpirit ſometimes poſts ſtern centinels; to check marauders; (*fixing his eye on Maillac.*)

Mrs. Flax. But Captain, if friendſhip undertakes to ſeize a heart by ſurprize——

Erlach. Friendſhip only ſurprizes fools.

Mrs. Flax. You are right; I ſhould have ſaid by conqueſt; ſhe then eludes miſtruſt who guards the outpoſt; in ſhort, I am reſolved to be your friend, that I may no longer continue your rival.

Erlach. Rival!—

Mrs. Flax. Yes Sir, yes: more than once [redacted] been heartily jealous of you; not a day paſſes but my h[redacted]and expatiates upon you with enthuſiaſm. It is a paſſion; a longing! were I ſuſpicious, I ſhou'd have fear'd to behold in you, a ſecond Chevalier d'Eon.

Maillac. Ha! ha! ha! *braviſſimo*

Mrs. Flax. Viſcount, I excuſe you from the duty of applauding each of my words.

Minna. Ha! ha! ha! bravo, *braviſſimo.*

Maillac. (*to Minna*) Little cenſor, thou ſhalt repay me this.

Minna. What, will you make more verſes upon me?

Erlach. It nearly comes to my turn to *cry bravo!*

Minna. (*to Erlach.*) Will you again reſtore the word to *honor?*

Erlach. (*ſmiling*) Indeed! m[redacted]tiful unknown!

Mrs. Flax. How! do you not know your friend's daughter?

Erlach. (*ſurpriſed*) What! can that be [redacted] Minchen? your pardon, Mademoiſelle Wilhelmina!

Minna. O! keep ever by Minna; otherwiſe, for the firſt time, I ſhall grieve at being grown tall.

Erlach. Yes, indeed, you are grown tall and handſome.

Minna. And can alſo bluſh brave captain.

Erlach. Flattery is not my way; beauty is like nobility; it does not make the wife vain.

Maillac. Ah! Captain, ſhe is as cruel as ſhe is beautiful.

Erlach. (*to Minna*) An admirer I preſume?

Minna. Yes, a bit of one.

Mrs. Flax. Monſieur le Vicomte de Maillac, a French emigrant.

Erlach. So, ſo, your humble ſervant.

Mrs. Flax. And here is Herr von Hugel, a worthy country gentleman.

Erlach. That is my object; to this gentleman I am already nearly related, for we Swiſs are naturalized to a country life.

Mrs. Flax. Your arm Captain, to join the company, where you ſhall hear a medley of names and titles announced.

Erlach. I had rather be introduced to a bed of hyacynths; for when I underſtood this to be a premier noble, and that a Cardinal de Fleury, I ſhould at leaſt be rewarded by the ſmell.

Maillac. Monſieur le Capitaine, ſeems to be infected with the new *philoſophie?*

Erlach. Infected! Bravo! the expreſſion is ſelect; we ſhall ſoon begin to build quarantine houſes on the frontiers, to ſtop travellers, poſting in the country, infected with the plague of reaſon.

Mrs. Flax. You bear yourſelf a name of renown.

Erlach. Unfortunately: it has often tormented me: if perchance preſented at court, it was buz'd thro' the circles, are you deſcended from the famous Rudolph Erlach? my God, yes; but am I a hair the better, or the taller for it? I Hans Erlach, ſerve God and my king to the beſt of my ability; whoever likes me on that ſcore, let us ſhake hands as friends: but let no man touch his bonnet to me on account of Rudolph Erlach, whoſe bones moulder under Straſburg Cathedral

Mrs. Flax. Well, my gallant Captain, I give you my hand, as the friend of Hans Erlach: but you muſt not forget, that when with wolves, we muſt join in the howl.

Erlach. Your pardon, that is one of the fenſeleſs bye-words; we ſhould never howl with wolves.

Mrs. Flax. But all this while my poor huſband is confined among them: let us haſten to releaſe him! (*ſhe drags him away with her*)

Erlach. (*following her reluctantly*) I am your priſoner; and aſſuredly priſoners may be made to ſerve as pioneers. [*Exit.*

SCENE VIII. MINNA, *the* VISCOUNT, *Herr von* HUGEL.

Maillac. Le Capitaine is rather *maſſif.*

Hugel. No ſummer-houſe; ſuch buildings ſhelter friendſhip in winter.

Minna. Shall we follow, to the company?

Maillac. You joke; the comet never aſks his tail, whether it will follow!

Minna. Ha! ha! ha! do you know that the tails of comets are ſaid to be compoſed from an exhalation of vapours?

Maillac. Compoſ'd as you pleaſe.

Minna. Are you of that opinion *Herr von* Hugel.

Hugel. I can find no compariſon to Minna equal to herſelf.

Minna. (*throws herſelf upon the bank*) Well then gentlemen, we will remain here; I am in no talking vein; I muſt be amuſed and care not how.

Maillac. Could I avail myſelf of this *heure de Berger*, and diſcourſe of my love.

Minna. No, no: do you not hear? I will be amuſed!

Maillac Perhaps you may like reading? I have here a volume of *Rouſſeau's Nouvelle Heloise.*

Minna. A book I dare not read: papa does not permit me.

Hugel. I have Woldemar's Jocobis in my pocket.

Minna. Emma and I have read that twice through; but tell me Viſcount, why is your book ſtiled *la Nouvelle Heloiſe?*

Maillac. Probably the author's caprice; for I cannot diſcover thro' the whole work, one ſyllable about an Heloiſe.

Hugel. (*ſmiles*)

Minna. It muſt however bear ſome reference.

Maillac. Moſt aſſuredly.

Minna. Heloiſa muſt have been extremely beautiful.

Maillac. (*preſenting Minna his ſnuff-box*) I can have the honor to ſhew you her portrait.

Minna. Does it reſemble her?

Maillac. Like two dew drops.

Minna. (*cunningly*) Perhaps you were acquainted?

Maillac. Not with her; ſhe has been dead ſome years; but I knew her uncle Fulbert, an honeſt old fellow; there is a copper plate of him.

Minna. You ſmile [illegible] von Hugel.

Hugel. I participate your amuſement.

Minna. We were converſing about the uncle, Viſcount; I ſuppoſe a perſon of ſome conſequence?

Maillac. A financier; one does not inveſtigate theſe gentry ſo preciſely; they keep an excellent table.

Minna. And Abelard?

Maillac. Was at that time, *avocat au parlement*, and had acquired ſome reputation.

Minna. Likewiſe I preſume an elderly man?

Maillac. In the prime of life.

Hugel. (*smiling*) O, yes! he can ſcarcely be more than ſix or ſeven hundred years old.

Mallac. How, Sir?

Hugel. At leaſt, Bayle aſſerts, he was born in the eleventh century.

Mall. That is falſe; I muſt know better than the obſcure perſon you mention.

Hugel. Bayle! an obſcure perſon!

Mallac. In ſhort, Sir, he, who can to his face accuſe a man of my condition of an untruth. He, at leaſt betrays, that he is no Frenchman. This Abelard is a man between forty and fifty, which I aſſert upon my honor! underſtand me, upon my honor; and there the affair is decided. Should you notwithſtanding this oppoſition, remain in doubt, I am prepared to give you, in the adjoining field, the moſt unequivocal proofs. (*He bows to Minna, caſts a haughty look at Hugel, and* [*Exit.*

SCENE IX. MINNA *and* HUGEL.

Minna. Why, this is a challange in due form.

Hugel. So it appears.

Minna. And you do not go?

Hugel. Becauſe I already know thro' experience, that on foot there is no overtaking him.

Minna. It would be comical for you to fight about Abelard.

Hugel. Men have often cut each other's throats for objects equally inſignificant.

Minna. And have been chronicled as martyrs.

Hugel. Preſumption is alſo a paſſion, and our paſſions are frequently but a ſtimulus to be roused by oppoſition.

Minna. This ſhould not be acknowledged to us girls.

Hugel. Why not?

Minna. Becauſe it might make one [illegible] miſtruſt the love of yours.

Hugel. Did I then mention love?

Minna. Is not love alſo a paſſion?

Hugel. Not true love, which enables our exiſtence, and becomes the innate impulſe to all that is good and great.

Minna. I doubt whether this definition would ſuit the taſte of my ſex: we are but too fond to excite paſſions, and to make philoſophy ridiculous, reaſon, crowned with fool's cap, kneeling at the feet of beauty, an engaging picture.

Hugel. But only in water colours.

Minna. Girls are ſeldom judges.

Hugel. Nor will they be judges —

Minna. Detraction, my good Sir

Hugel. I wiſh you were open to demonſtration.

Minna. We have demonſtration at heart, but men in our heads.

Hugel. Heart and head ſhould promote a friendly intercourſe.

Minna. O! ſuch an intercourſe were too tedious.

Hugel. Or marry!

Minna. Wedlock would be yet more tedious.

Hugel. You are not ſerious? but I am confident that at your golden wedding, you will defend holy matrimony with all the animation of youth.

Minna. At my golden wedding! heaven forbid! to ſurvive that, I muſt at lateſt marry to-morrow.

Hugel. Which muſt wholly depend upon yourſelf.

Minna. Upon me? comical enough! as if it depended upon one's ſelf to reſolve, to-day I will give away my heart.

Hugel. Why not? as eaſy as to declare, to-day my ear ſhall not be ſhut againſt the poor beggar; to-day, I will comfort the unfortunate.

Minna. My ſagacious ſir, you over rate the worth of a maiden's heart.

Hugel. I only alluded to your own.

Minna. Which I conjecture, you cannot comprehend.

Hugel. I! not comprehend your heart? then muſt the ſweet remembrance of my childhood be obliterated! Whither are flown thoſe happy times, when your father reſided on his eſtate, and lived in friendly intercourſe with mine; when each fine ſummer's evening aſſembled us children in the village, you beckon'd me kindly from afar, and called me, thou and Auguſtus! when ſuddenly, the frolickſome Minna vaniſh'd from our ſports, to ſhare her penny with a beggar, or to aſſiſt a fallen child—When ſhe induſtriouſly gathered the ſtrawberries for her father, or ſelected flowers to celebrate her mother's birth-day.——O! Minna! Minna! I, not know your heart!

Minna. (*diſtrait*) Thoſe were happy hours!

Hugel. Bleſt with innocence and peace of mind.

Minna. Nothing can be compared with the enchantment of our early youth.

Hugel. Except it be the charm of firſt love.

Minna. The one is tranſitory as the other.

Hugel. A random obſervation from the great world; in cities every thing is painted; landſcapes upon canvaſs; health upon the cheeks, and love upon the ſtage; in cities, words are appreciated by faſhion; in the country they flow from feeling; in cities, they ſay, your obedient ſervant; in the country, good-day: the firſt is politeneſs, the ſecond heartineſs: I love you,

exclaims the townſman, with a grimace; I love thee ſays the countryman, with a gliſtening eye; the firſt repeats the word an hundred times a day; the other expreſſes it but once in his life. To the one love is a mere paſtime; to the other the enjoyment of life; here a gaudy flower, the ſhew of a ſummer's day; and there a ſheltering foilage from rain and the parching ſun—an inſtrument never out of tune through change of weather.

Minna. I now hear, for the firſt time, that you are alſo a poet.

Hugel. (*drooping*) O! my throbbing heart! thy ſenſibility is miſconſtrued into fiction.

Minna. I begin to fear thee—romance is infectious.

Hugel. Romance! I have been but too much inur'd to hear the genuine taſte for love and nature thus abuſed, I therefore rivetted my heart, and threw not the key into the ocean of the world, but treaſur'd it, as unfolding the ideas of my hopes and wiſhes:—I wiſh'd to diſcover the female, to whom the unpreſuming youth was more deſerving than the pert coxcomb; who, at a gala-ball, would not paſs with a contemptuous leer the ruſtic noble, becauſe unpractiſed in the dance; and who, at the ſumptuous board, did not mistake ſilence for dullneſs: Ah! I thought to have found her——

Minna. (*in a ſoft heſitating tone*) And were miſtaken!

Hugel. (*with enthuſiaſm*) No, no—I am not miſtaken! this tender inquietude manifeſts your beautiful ſoul; yes, I often rejoic'd to behold, amidſt the buſtle of the world, your lovely countenance clouded with liſtleſſneſs and *ennui*: that where your heart was not intereſted, you could diſplay your judgment. ——O! fly theſe baneful circles, which oppoſe bulwarks againſt reaſon; card-houſes againſt licentiouſneſs; where thoſe ſtyle themſelves friends, who diſſipate one another's time; where one is familiariz'd to love, by calculating that together the revenues ſuffice to fit up a houſe; where the poſſeſſor is reputed generous, if, on a Sunday afternoon, he diſtributes twelve-pence among a dozen poor, and he is eſteemed pious, thro' forbearance to talk of his religion, from the fear of being bewildered and miſled; where the honeſt fellow inwardly deſpiſes the powerful ſcoundrel, to whom he is compelled to pay obeiſance; where we compaſſionate the diſtreſs'd whilſt ſhuffling the cards, and by the third trick have utterly forgotten them: in ſhort, where egotiſm mingles with intereſt, fear produces meanneſs, and the habitude of vice maſks its deformity. Fly from this peſtiferous atmoſphere to rural ſcences, where every noble feeling is exalted; there is the heart unfolded to the good

and beautiful; there, love and friendſhip are not viſitors, but reſidents. God is honor'd, when with wondering tranſport we view the ſtarry heaven. We give to the poor to relieve their wants; vanity mingles not her oſtentatious gifts, among the precious contributions of benevolence—there is mirth without cards, and converſation without detraction; one is not aſhamed to eſteem oppreſſed worth, and loudly to proclaim, a ſcoundrel!—a ſcondrel. O! I poſſeſs only a ſlender patrimony—but, if to all the bleſſings which induſtry, fortune, and my heart beſtow upon me, Minna deſigns to contribute love, my little paradiſe will only want a ridge of lofty rocks, to make it impenetrable to envy.—You are ſilent. The lively Minna caſts down her eyes, and contemplates the flowers in her boſom.

Minna. Methinks Herr von Hugel, it is a proof of my eſteem for you—that at this inſtant, my levity forſakes me.

Hugel. Your eſteem is my pride, but only love gives bliſs.

Minna. Ere I anſwer you, confeſs to me ſincerely; what proportion does my figure hold in your love?

Hugel. Sincerely, my beſt Minna; I have never examin'd myſelf, as to that point.

Minna. Then do it now, it materially intereſts me to know it:—Should I, think you, have engag'd your affections, had I been ugly and deformed?—I appeal to your honor and honeſty, for a faithful anſwer.

Hugel. Well then, why ſhould I diſavow an impreſſion, which youth and beauty produce in every well organized frame:—I ſhould love you, even were you plain, but whether I ſhould have ſo clearly recognized your ſoul, concealed in ſuch unſeemlineſs, I cannot venture to pronounce.

Minna. And ſuppoſing the ſmall-pox ſhould ſuddenly diſfigure me, or if I be not what I ſeem?

Hugel. What a ſuppoſition!

Minna. Girls are ſkilful in concealing their imperfections.

Hugel. My life upon the venture.

Minna. You ſhall venture nothing—ſhe who will deceive an honeſt man, cannot deſerve his love—*(ſhe takes his hand)* I—Herr von Hugel, highly eſteem you; ſomething more perhaps—but ——

Hugel. No but.

Minna. I muſt confeſs to you—

Hugel. (trembling) That your heart is engaged?

Minna. My heart is free.

Hugel. Well?—

Minna. I am—I appear——

Hugel. O! you are what you appear—

Minna. No! no! I——

(the muſicians at a diſtance play a Waltz.)

Minna. (uneaſy and confuſed) Dancing is renewed, ſhall we join the company?

Hugel. Without indulging me with an anſwer?

Minna. Yes, yes, I will anſwer you ſoon, though not now: this waltz, it delights me; come, come along, and let us dance?

Hugel. It is out of my power at preſent to dance.

Minna. Indeed!—the muſic is ſo inviting—you will not then? excuſe me Herr von Hugel, I muſt look out for a partner. *(ſhe hurries off)*

Hugel. (looks after her amazed) Is it poſſible?—God is this poſſible? the acknowledgment of heart-felt paſſion diſſipated by a wretched waltz; ſhe diſcovered an honeſt man, but ſhe ſought a dancer. Now then farewell, the holy belief in innocence and nature; away Hugel, and hide thyſelf under thy thatch; water thy ſalads, and ſcare the birds from thy domain, that their notes may not remind thee of this curſed waltz. [*Exit.*

ACT III.

SCENE I. Captain Erlach.

ABUNDANCE of eating and drinking; a peal of laughter, but no pure enjoyment: he who laughs with all his might, is not of courſe always happy; one laughs at his own wit, and if he be rich, or powerful, the circle is conſtrained to join in chorus; another laughs at a *double entendre*, of his own painful invention, and ogles the ladies around to enjoy their confuſion; here titters a goſling, to diſguiſe an aukward timidity, and there leers an ape, becauſe his neighbour's tail is a hair too long:—here is a good ſoul of a mother relating her offspring's diſplay of genius, and compelling her yawning hearers to join in the admiration—yonder, is a ſketch diſcuſſing, from the magazine of ſcandal, and a malignant ſmile blaſts the opening bud; when they return home, ſays his excellency to her excellency, what a delicious party, how heartily we have laugh'd: No; this is not after my way, the moſt rational among the groupe, ſeems to be the Counſellor's lady, a canary bird among bullfinches; warbling to them, till they imitate a tune or two;

if ſometimes her wild notes eſcape her, they are lovely melodious tones;—could ſhe but know how her huſband is chagrined; but patience, ſhe ſhall learn it. Once domeſticated together a couple of months under one roof——a couple of months!—why Erlach, can'ſt thou ſwim ſo long in this ſtrange element? why not?—Flaxland is my friend; and Emma! what choaks thee old boy?—daughter, ſiſter, friend; no matter how I call her, I dearly love her, and having once for all ſaved her from periſhing—why—ay—ſo—a good girl, only one thing in her diſpleaſes me; ſhe ſhould not, meanwhile, have grown eight years older.

SCENE II. EMMA *and* ERLACH.

Emma. (looking about for ſome one and perceives Erlach). Ah! you here?

Erlach. I am here, my dear child, were you looking for me?

Emma. No: I was ſeeking; I want to ſpeak with ſome one, who has crept into ſome buſh, God knows where. *(ſhe gives him a friendly nod)* [*Exit.*

Erlach. (ſolus) Moſt obedient!—that was not methinks ſo pretty in her!—ſhe might as well have remained a couple of minutes, and chatted a word or two about the weather: hem! who can ſhe be ſeeking? who is this ſome one? and what can ſhe have ſo urgent to ſay to him? Some one!—why that may be a female; tho' I will wager it is a man!—O! ho, Miſs Emma, perhaps a ſecret of the heart:—well! what is that to me? am I not her; her father?—ſhe dared not amuſe me about the blank nobody: I, however, ſurely deſerved a particle of confidence, juſt for a word at parting; to have been whiſpered this ſomebody is nam'd ſo and ſo; but ſo it is, when girls become eight years older.

SCENE III. ERLACH *and* MRS. FLAXLAND.

Mrs. Flax. My dear captain you court ſolitude!

Erlach. It is difficult to meet her in theſe quarters.

Mrs. Flax. Is that praiſe, or blame?

Erlach. I never diſpute upon taſte.

Mrs. Flax. I underſtand: but do not miſconſtrue into taſte, what with me is only cuſtom, and not ſeldom a tireſome cuſtom.

Erlach. What hinders you from ſhaking off this tireſome cuſtom?

Mrs. Flax. My huſband likes this manner of life.

Erlach. He like this life?——

Mrs. Flax. If we are alone, he inſtantly becomes uneaſy, inquires twenty times in an hour, if I am not vapour'd, if I

will not make ſuch and ſuch a viſit, and is not eaſy till I order the carriage.

Erlach. And accompanies you?

Mrs. Flax. Seldom! only when I earneſtly entreat him.

Erlach. What can he do at home alone?

Mrs. Flax. (*playful*) God knows: peradventure he makes gold; at leaſt, when I return, he always receives me as cordially, and as kindly, as if he had diſcovered a treaſure.

Erlach. Ha! this grieves me.

Mrs. Flax. How! what grieves you?

Erlach. To hear that my honeſt friend, ſince our ſeparation, has learnt to diſguiſe himſelf.

Mrs. Flax. Diſguiſe! how ſo?

Erlach. No ſuch alteration occurs to a man at his years.

Mrs. Flax. Speak more intelligibly.

Erlach. I had rather be ſilent; we do not as yet know enough of one another.

Mrs. Flax. Not know one another! when my huſband gave me a right to his affection, he gave me alſo a right to your friendſhip.

Erlach. Friendſhip and old hock are good; but mix'd with a ſharpneſs, not perhaps to every one's taſte.

Mrs. Flax. You excite my curioſity more and more: I beſeech you captain, don't count me among the formal beings who ſcrew up their mouths at a truiſm becauſe it is ſomewhat bitter; our acquaintance is yet young, but were I ſlumbering on a bed of roſes, and a ſtranger preſerved me from a viper's ſting, this ſtranger would become my friend.

Erlach. If you think thus.

Mrs. Flax. Indeed, I think thus:—to pleaſe my huſband is my moſt earneſt wiſh; to be ſure the difference in our ages is conſiderable, and I did not fall into his arms thro' love, but was ſomehow ſurprized into them thro' eſteem: we have not acted a romance together, no light'ning has inflamed, but a cheering marriage ſun has conſtantly animated us; be you then animated to ſpeak confidently—but, notwithſtanding this declaration, ſhould my preſence any way confuſe you, I will place myſelf behind theſe trees; forget my being here, and you need not ſpare me in a ſoliloquy.

Erlach. Bravo! that is my way, thoſe who think thus, I eſteem highly; and to thoſe I eſteem highly, I ſpeak the truth.

Mrs. Flax. Forward then—

Erlach. How can a woman with ſuch an excellent head and heart, endure ſo many fools about her?

Mrs. Flax. Alas! dear Captain, ſhould we baniſh fools; our circles would become very circumſcribed.

Erlach. The ſmaller the better—ſenſe and ſociability are gueſts who diſappear if they behold lights at every window.

Mrs. Flax. But folly lends good ſenſe a foil.

Erlach. She does not want it, and if your huſband has pretended to like this manner of life, he has deceived you.

Mrs. Flax. That would grieve me.—

Erlach. He thought this indulgence was due to your youth.

Mrs. Flax. Then he little knew me.

Erlach. He feared you might imagine——

Mrs. Flax. What?

Erlach. That he was jealous.

Mrs. Flax. Jealous!—you joke!

Erlach. Should I, for example, aſſure you that laſt night he never cloſed an eye, that his imagination kept him on the rack till morning, that he was obliged to force himſelf away, when he heard your carriage draw up.

Mrs. Flax. I am all aſtoniſhment!

Erlach. It gnaws my heart-ſtrings, ſigh'd he mournfully, I endeavor in vain to conquer this weakneſs.

Mrs. Flax. My God!—why did he not ſay ſo to me?

Erlach. Falſe ſhame, the demon of confidence.

Mrs. Flax. Well, I have hitherto left our company to a chance medley; in future, he ſhall have the ſelection; he ſhall be my conſtant companion; this very day he ſhall make out a liſt, and name the perſons whoſe acquaintance he eſteems.

Erlach. The liſt will be very ſhort!

Mrs. Flax. Not ſo:—there are here many worthy, ſenſible characters.

Erlach. O! yes; but the more there are, ſo much the more difficult for an individual, who is no Crœſus, to treat them.

Mrs. Flax. What do you mean? Flaxland is rich!

Erlach. He was!

Mrs. Flax. How?

Erlach. He may yet be called in good circumſtances; but if his property continues to be melted, as it has been for theſe laſt three years——

Mrs. Flax. My good Sir, you alarm me.

Erlach. Where the outgoings ſo far exceeds the income——

Mrs. Flax. Can it be poſſible!

Erlach. He might, peradventure, ere long have been com-

pelled to infringe upon the maternal patrimony of his children.

Mrs. Flax. My God!—why did he not tell me this!

Erlach. False shame! the less riches the less esteem.

Mrs. Flax. But not in my eyes——

Erlach. He has long wished to retire to his farm.

Mrs. Flax. Willingly: heartily;—this present evening.

Erlach. But he fears at your age, that country tameness—

Mrs. Flax. O! how it distresses me, that my husband did not think it worth while to appreciate my character,—that a stranger should repose more confidence in me, than a man of whose affection I am proud—that I should injure his children, and destroy his peace of mind! that I should dissipate the savings of paternal solitude and maternal affection! why did he not put me to the proof? why did he suppose that a swarm of coxcombs could entertain me better than domestic quiet, and the converse of a well informed man! O! Captain Erlach, men so often reproach us for our weakness,—it is no weakness, it is the soul's softness, and it chiefly depends upon you to mould it into goodness; but you conceive that female love ill accords with truth; you require health and soundness of soul, and yet poison it with flattery; but I am complaining and arguing, where I should be acting; your hand, dear Captain, you shall witness and acknowledge that I merit your confidence. [*Exit in great emotion.*

Erlach. (alone) Why right! this is my way; if she keeps her word I remain here—but if I stay, the lass must alter her manner, and not run away from me—she must have confidence in me: I should like, however, to learn if she has found her plaguy somebody.

SCENE IV. Erlach *and* Hugel.

Hugel. (enters in a deep reverie)

Erlach. Here comes one who has disentangled himself from the babel, and tries to compose his ears: welcome Herr von Hugel, I wish you joy.

Hugel. (starting) Of what?

Erlach. Of solitude. Some good folks imitate the nightengales; when surrounded by clamor they are silent; you did not seem yonder to be in your right place.

Hugel. I at least resemble the nightengales, by feeling myself in my proper place only in the country.

Erlach. You are complimenting yourself.

Hugel. Were my attachment to a country life a privilege, I would share this privilege with every clown.

Erlach. Would he thereby lose ought of his worth?

Hugel. Yes, with many.

Erlach. If you allude to the French locuſts, who here infeſt the air, you may be right.

Hugel. No, no: better men, perhaps the beſt! yonder Frenchman, for example; I dare not preſume to appreciate him, but he pleaſes——

Erlach. Whom?

Hugel. He is prepoſſeſſing.

Erlach. To whom?

Hugel. (ſighing) He is probably beloved——

Erlach. (more uneaſy than inquiſitive) By whom?

Hugel. Ah! by a lady who fails in nothing, but the faculty to diſcern the heart which reflects her image.

Erlach. And this lady! for as to the heart, I know it.

Hugel. You know it!

Erlach. Yes, without the faculty of looking into it—but the lady?

Hugel. That, methinks, you might eaſily have divined—for I ſaid expreſsly, that nothing fail'd her.

Erlach. Moſt obedient. *(aſide)* He certainly ſpoke of Emma. *(loud)* You believe then, ſhe is partial to the Frenchman?

Hugel. I muſt alſo fear it.

Erlach. (half to himſelf) Hem! ſhould he be the ſame one, ſhe ſo anxiouſly ſought!

Hugel. (eager) How! ſhe ſought?

Erlach. A ſomebody, the devil take him—with ſuch haſte, ſhe was near tumbling over me.

Hugel. Indeed?

Erlach. She was panting to ſpeak with him.

Hugel. I lament the ſearch was fruitleſs, as an hour before he walk'd away with a couple of courtiers.

Erlach. (murmuring to himſelf) Accurſed coxcomb—ſuch a girl, without a failing—only too old, too old——

Hugel. How too old? ſhe is only ſixteen.

Erlach. So much the worſe.

SCENE V. EMMA *enters, and exclaims on perceiving* HUGEL.

Ah! are you there?

Hugel. (ſurprized) I, Madam!

Erlach. (amazed) Hem!——

Emma. I have been looking for you above an hour.

Hugel. I was wandering in the mea[illegible] not ſuppoſing that here I could be miss'd.

Erlach. So he was the ſame one whom you ſought?

Emma. Yes, dear Captain, I have ſomething of importance to communicate to Herr von Hugel.

Erlach. Probably alſo a ſecret?

Emma. Emma has no ſecret for her benefactor, but it concerns a friend.

Erlach. (feelingly) So, ſo, I comprehend; conſtraint is not my way—I ſhall ſoon enough learn the ſecret from the bridegroom. [*Exit.*

SCENE VI. EMMA *and* HUGEL.

Emma. Herr von Hugel, I have a meſſage to you.

Hugel. If this meſſage gives me pain, which I greatly apprehend, there has been at leaſt the conſideration to chooſe an aſſuaging meſſenger.

Emma. I hope to be the meſſenger of peace.

Hugel. Peace precludes diſcord, and I know not—

Emma. You have told my friend you lov'd her.

Hugel. Only told——

Emma. No ſophiſtry, by your leave.

Hugel. Well then, to my ſorrow, I love Minna!

Emma. Why to your ſorrow?

Hugel. I am a plain countryman, which, for a moment I ceas'd to recollect. Minna has deeply humbled me, it will never again be forgotten.

Minna. Humbled!—that is a hard expreſſion.

Hugel. The occaſion was harder than the expreſſion—ſhe who treats a ſerious propoſal as a jeſt—ſhe whoſe levity hurries a man with the tears of love in his eyes, to a dance—let me ſay, does not that imply contempt?

Emma. Dear Herr von Hugel, beware of an intemperate judgment—you may repent at Minna's feet; Do you make no allowance for a poor girl's embarraſſment? I aſſure you, that moſt of the follies of which we are accuſed towards your ſex, ariſe from embarraſſment—how, if Minna was heartily well diſpoſed to you, but only ſhy of a certain confeſſion, which ſhe feared might, in the eyes of the lover, diminiſh the worth of the beloved?

Hugel. (ſmiling ſarcaſtically) You are ſuppoſing a caſe——

Emma. I ſuppoſe nothing; there are certain points, Herr von Hugel, which to our ſex are very important, but which, fortunately, do not always ſtrike your eyes: ſhould a girl be not completely what ſhe ſeems to be, ſhe may, if ſhe can, deceive the public, but not the man whom ſhe intends to marry.

Hugel. Minna [illegible] what ſhe ſeems! I do not underſtand you.

Emma. Minna [illegible]ry beautiful.

Hugel. O! certainly.

Emma. A charming ſhape.

Hugel. Why tell me that?

Emma. You find her faultleſs!

Hugel. You are in jeſt.

Emma. A man, and eſpecially a lover, cannot be an accurate obſerver; we females examine more cloſely.

Hugel. I beſeech you to ſpeak plainer.

Emma. Know then, that Minna's apparent levity aroſe from being aſhamed to acknowledge to you, what ſhe thought indiſpenſable; that ſhe—ſtrange!—I am almoſt myſelf aſhamed—(*in haſte*) that ſhe is ſomewhat mis ſhaped—at laſt, it is out.

Hugel. Mis ſhaped!

Emma. On the left ſide; ſhe fell down ſtairs from her nurſe's arms. Dreſs can conceal the defect; but to the eyes of her future huſband, ſhe wiſhed not to appear more engaging than ſhe really is—now you have a key to the enigma. Falſe ſhame deterred her from telling you herſelf, for moſt females would rather avoid a mental defect than a corporeal failing—Minna does not belong to this common claſs, her tongue only denied its ſervice. Now you know all; you know what ſhe has loſt in the attraction of her form, and what ſhe acquired in the beauty of her ſoul: my friend murmured ſoftly in my ear, Emma, I love him! but that let him rather hope than know. You ſee I have exceeded my powers; the coming moment will evince whether I muſt repent my precipitency.

Hugel. (*tranſported*) Is this a dream? Minna! nobleſt Minna! where is ſhe? where can I find her?

Emma. Dare I enquire with what intention?

Hugel. And can you enquire? My beloved! my bride!

Emma. It is as I expected! Go—where ſhe is I know not—inſtinct guides a lover.

Hugel. (*haſtens away*) Minna! Minna!

SCENE VII. EMMA *alone.*

Emma. Go then, but thou wilt not ſoon find her; probably ſhe has crept, through falſe ſhame, into ſome nook or other, there ſhe ſits forlorn and liſtens, and her heart often throbs high at the idea—Emma is now ſpeaking to him—(*ſhe ſighs*) How is this? I catch myſelf at a ſigh! my boſom is not ſurely nurturing envy at my friend's happineſs! No, no, but a maiden may be allowed to confeſs; that to find a deſerving, accompliſhed huſband, is truly enviable. Erlach [illegible] to go away murmuring and uneaſy; he did not reliſh leaving me alone with Hugel—why ſo? Girl! girl! do not diſſemble to any one what thou now thinkeſt. (*ſhe reflects ſhortly in a penſive*)

SCENE VIII. *Madame Moreau appears very nearly, but decently dreſſed; ſhe ſupports herſelf on a walking cane, ſometimes ſtopping and looking myſteriouſly round; at length ſhe approaches* Emma *unperceived, and metamorphoſes her from head to foot with ſingular malice and curioſity.*

Madame Moreau. Your pardon, Mademoiſelle.

Emma. (*Starting from her reverie*) Who are you, Madam? whom may you want?

Moreau. Is this Counſellor Harland's houſe?

Emma. Yes.

Moreau. You are, perhaps, his daughter?

Emma. Would I could anſwer yes to that queſtion—do you wiſh to ſpeak to the Counſellor?

Moreau. Extremely, if convenient.

Emma. Follow me—I will conduct you to him.

Moreau. Is he alone?

Emma. I believe ſo.

Moreau. If he be quite diſengaged, I wiſh he would condeſcend, through compaſſion to an aged woman who cannot well aſcend the ſteps, to meet me in the garden.

Emma. I will tell him ſo.

Moreau. Has he any family?

Emma. One ſon in the army, and a daughter.

Moreau. And you are not this daughter—that's a pity.

Emma. You are very kind Madam; whom ſhall I announce to the Counſellor?

Moreau. A poor old woman, nothing elſe: I hope to be in a manſion, where this title will neither ſhut door nor heart againſt me.

Emma. I find you well know the Counſellor—he will be inſtantly here. *Exit.*

SCENE IX. Madame Moreau *alone.*

Indeed! ah, good child, confidence in mankind is a tender plant, ſo ſeldom cheriſhed by the milk of human kindneſs, that at length it periſhes; yes, formerly he was benevolent and compaſſionate, but alſo young! Youth is tender, but age indurates all, and what dare I hope from a brother, when my only ſon—huſh, huſh; ſpeak it not aloud, poor mother! rather think it was a dream, and be ſilent! Will he not be aſhamed of me? the rich have couſins and aunts in every corner of the world; poverty is only related to miſery. It were better to conceal who I am, and firſt [illegible] his manner and reception; perhaps I may be more welcome as an object of benevolence, than if I demanded his aſſiſtance as an act of duty! Methinks,——yes,

——O God! how my heart beats!——Do not betray thyſelf! For if thou muſt again abandon this houſe, where wilt thou find a grave?

SCENE X. *Counſellor* FLAXLAND *and Madame* MOREAU.

Flax. My foſter daughter tells me you wiſh to ſpeak with me —how can I ſerve you?

Moreau. I am an Emigrant, had houſe and home, huſband and children, and am now reduced to this ſtaff, but had rather ſtarve than ſtoop to beggery. In my youth, I learnt much for my amuſement, but which, now perhaps, in my old age, might procure me my bread: I can ſew and waſh, cook and bake—moſt worthy Sir, do you want a houſekeeper?

Flax. I muſt with regret, Madam, ſay no.

Moreau. You have probably ſome young children, whom I might inſtruct in Engliſh and French?

Flax. I have only a daughter, who is grown up.

Moreau. Oh God! muſt I then alſo leave this manſion without conſolation?

Flax. No madam, that ſhall not be: I have friends to whom I will recommend you, and mean while you may occupy a ſpare room, and a vacant place at my table.

Moreau. God reward you with an ever cheerful heart!—My friend ſpoke truth, when ſhe promiſed me here a welcome.

Flax. Your friend! You have perhaps a recommendation to me?

Moreau. I was born at Lyons, and knew there, ſeveral years ſince, an unfortunate German lady, Philippina Moreau.

Flax. God! my ſiſter! does ſhe yet live?

Moreau. She is dead!

Flax. Dead! (*tears burſt from his eyes; he turns and leans againſt a tree, weeping.*)

Moreau. (*aſide with uplifted hands*) He yet loves me——there is yet ſome one in the world who loves me!

Flax. (*looking aghaſt*) The firſt intelligence in twenty years! ſhe is dead!

Moreau. She died in miſery!

Flax. Oh! why was ſhe ſo forgetful of her only brother?

Moreau. She did not forget him, but was ſilent through ſhame. Can I, ſaid ſhe, intrude myſelf upon my brother in rags? will he not reproach me with my weakneſs?

Flax. How could ſhe thus miſconſtrue William's heart?

Moreau. Shall I reviſit my paternal roof, to learn that my good parents bequeathed me their curſe as an inheritance?

Flax. Both father and mother bleſt her on their death bed.

Moreau. B'eft her! O that I could convey this word of comfort into my friend's grave.

Flav. Long, long have I hoped, that ſhe would at length recal'ſt the brother, whom when a lad ſhe ſo heartily loved.

Moreau. (animated.) Yes, yes, that did ſhe! *(corpoſes herſelf)* ſhe has often aſſured me of it.

Flav. My hopes of ſeeing her again grew with theſe trees. I planted the one and my ſiſter the other; time has interwoven their branches, but has torn my ſiſter's heart from mine.

Moreau. (greatly affected) No, no.

Flav. Our dear mother planted yonder arbour a year before her death—I ſhall not live, ſaid ſhe, to behold theſe tender ſhoots extend their ſhade, but perhaps thou and thy ſiſter may one day ſit under them and remember me.

Moreau. (endeavouring to turn to repreſs his tears) I can no longer!

Flav. (ſtanding over of his kinſman) I envy our forefathers their delightful ſuperſtition; how fondly could I believe my ſiſter's ſpirit in this tree.

Moreau. (ſinks down on the ſeat) My brother! William!

Flav. (ſtarting back) Gracious! what is this!

Moreau. (turning, ſpringing up and ſeizing his hand) William! my brother!

Flav. (ſtarting, ſtanding ſtiff, and looking ſtrange) Philippina! art thou here?

Moreau. I am: do not ſpurn me!

Flav. I ſpurn thee! *(ſtarting)*

Moreau. My good William, we met me under the linden tree, which we planted on our mother's birth-day—we then embraced each other, and our parents ſmiled with maternal love—let me once more, under their ſhade, preſs thee to my heart, and the mother will ſmile in heaven and bleſs.

Flav. (ſtarting backward, and ſtanding ſtiff, looking at him, but with his head turned away from him) Mother rejoices with us! the Almighty has granted this hour to the wretched mother!

Moreau. (turns her head to him) Here let me die!

Flav. Here ſhalt thou by my ſide receive our youthful endearments; here, on my arm reſt, ſhalt every tree, whence we uſed to gather fruits, and yonder daiſy bank, where we often repoſed; then will I lead thee to the paternal roof, and ſhew the chamber which was called thine—the nut-brown table yet remains, where we learnt to draw—and the chair where the dear mother uſed to take me up on her knee! *(he ſtands ſtiff, looking at him, but with his head turned away from him)* Monſter, why art thou? this deadly paleneſs!—in God's name, help! help!

SCENE XI. EMMA *and* JOHN, *enter haſtily, from oppoſite ſides.*

John. What is the matter?

Emma. Alas! the poor old woman is taken ill.

Flax. She is my ſiſter!

Emma. Your ſiſter! (*ſhe aſſiſts Madame Moreau, who recovers ſlowly*)

John. How, Mademoiſelle Phillippina?

Flax. Yes, good old man, thou and I have often wept her loſs:—rejoice! we have her again.

Moreau. (*holds out her hand to John*) My good John, art thou ſtill living?

John. Ay! why ſhould I not? and your god-child is alſo alive!

Emma. Dear Madam, ſhall I conduct you into the houſe? you will there be more comfortable.

Moreau. No, dear child:—the freſh air, and the ſight that now enlivens me, are the beſt reſtoratives.

Flax. If our affection thus revives thee—O! why didſt thou not ſooner return to our arms?

Moreau. Forgive me brother: forgive me, my good parents: often when I gathered reſolution to ſurmount my ſhame, fate threw inſurmountable difficulties in my way; I haſtened with my huſband from hence to his birth-place—Lyons—his parents were exaſperated, they had other objects in view for him, and rejected us; we determined to await for the ſoothing hand of time, ſome favourable change in our deſtiny, and with the ſlender pittance of a friend, we embarked for America.

Emma. To America! dare I enquire in what town you ſettled?

Moreau. In Charleſton.

Emma. Gracious God! (*ſhe ſtands by Madame Moreau, ſurveying her with the moſt fixed attention and anxiety, but unperceived by Madame Moreau.*)

Moreau. My huſband's induſtry maintained us ſparingly; but we loved, and were content—heaven bleſt our union with two dear babes, a ſon and a daughter.

Emma. What! a daughter?—

Flax. Where is ſhe?—

Moreau. Ah, William, do not aſk: it pleaſed heaven to punish me for the ſorrow, I had occaſioned my parents. The war in which America contended for her independence, reduced us to poverty; we returned to Europe eight years ſince, we found with my huſband's mother living, but ſhe ſoon after died; we enjoyed a momentary repoſe till the terrible revolution deſtroyed our tranquility—my huſband became a zealous

patriot, and fell a ſacrifice to avarice and anarchy; my ſon, miſguided young man, emigrated with ſome young diſſipated noble ſe—Alas! they have but too well ſucceeded, in having faſhioned him into a vain ſelf-conceated coxcomb, and eradicated every ſenſe of nature and filial duty—I think it even, he was the firſt who met me near the city gates.

Flax. This city?——

Moreau. Yes, he is here—I recognis'd him, not a glimmering of doubt remains to comfort me, with a groupe of riotous companions he rode paſt me:—my ſon! I exclaimed, and fell on my knees: he knew my voice, he threw a haſty look at me, I ſaw the blood ruſhing to his cheeks, the bridle trembled in his hand; I heard one of the ſet enquire, who is that? I ſtretch'd out my arms and ſighed, I am his mother!—alas! he was aſhamed of his kneeling parent.—The good woman, has loſt her ſenſes, ſaid he, and gave his horſe the ſpur.

Flax. Poor ſiſter!—

John. Good God! can'ſt thou ſuffer ſuch a weed in thy beautiful garden?——

Moreau. I revere the avenging arm of providence—when from afar I perceived my paternal roof, the conſciouſneſs of my own undutifulneſs overcame me, and lo! God ſent my ſon in my way, to exemplify the thankleſs child: I do not complain; it is juſt:—who forſakes father and mother comes to a childleſs old age.

Flax. But thy daughter!

Moreau. She died a miſerable death!

Emma. (*eagerly*) She died!—where? when?——

Moreau. Muſt I alſo relate that mournful event?—the Britiſh and Heſſians ſtormed Charleston——

Emma. (*wild*) The Heſſians!

Flax. Proceed, dear ſiſter.

Moreau. One dreadful night, the town was fired and plundered; all fled, I clung to my huſband, who carried our daughter in his arms, the boy ran by our ſide, ſcarce had we reached the door, when my huſband fell by a muſket ſhot: in the ſame inſtant, a throng paſſed thro' the narrow ſtreet, and threw me ſenſeleſs to the ground—after wandering alone for two days in the woods, I found my huſband, but my Emma was loſt!

Emma. Emma; in God's name——

Moreau. What means this?

Flax. (*with a faultering voice*) Siſter, this young lady is alſo named Emma, and after the ſtorming of Charleston, was diſcovered among the ſmoaking ruins!

Moreau. Brother!———
Flax. Haſt thou any mark to recognize thy daughter?
Moreau. None but my heart!
Flax. Her age at that period?——
Moreau Eight years.
Flax. Her linen mark'd A. M.
Moreau. (*almoſt fainting*) Amelia Moreau!
Flax. It is her!
Emma. (*falling on her boſom*) My mother!
Moreau. (*faints in her brother's arms*)
John. (*ſobs and wipes his eyes; the curtain drops*)

ACT IV.

SCENE I. ERLACH *enters in haſte, ſtops in the middle of the ſtage; appears to be conſidering; after a minute's deep thought, he raps his cane on the ground, as if he meant 'it ſhall be ſo,' and is going off; the Counſellor meets and ſtops him.*

Flax. Whither? whither?
Erlach. Away!
Flax. What is amiſs?
Erlach. Nothing.
Flax. Thou art a ſingular being.
Erlach. Accurſed hour when I entered this houſe.
Flax. Do'ſt dream?
Erlach. No, I ſay no; it is not my way, nor ever ſhall be.
Flax. What is it then?
Erlach. Flaxland, haſt ever ſeen a fool?——behold here ſtands one.
Flax. Singular being! what maggot has crept into thy head? we have been ſeeking thee this hour!
Erlach. Me! nobody ſeeks me: yes, well, if I were ſomebody——
Flax. At length we eſpied thee in the meadow; marching with a quick ſtep, backwards and forwards, and ſkirmiſhing with your hands———
Erlach. That is nothing to any body.
Flax. I was haſtening to tell thee———
Erlach. I already know all.
Flax. Impoſſible! the unhop'd diſcovery——
Erlach. Silence! I tell thee I already know all: the girl is a bride, is ſhe not? with Herr von Hugel; is it not ſo?

Flax. Doſt already know that?—it has but juſt now been told me!

Erlach. There we have it!—it is then true?—farewell!—

Flax. My God, whither wilt thou?—

Erlach. Do.t think I will be the laughing ſtock of the bridal feaſt? hey!—

Flax. My friend, I never ſaw thee thus.

Erlach. I am too, for the firſt time in my life, a fool—but it has been of old my motto, to be nothing by halves. I am an entire fool.

Flax. How can this connection concern thee?

Erlach. Man, aſk me not—torture me not—art thou ſo dull of comprehenſion that I muſt ſpell it to thee? why yes, I lately read to thee a chapter on falſe ſhame, and thou may-e.t retort upon me, t at I am labouring under the ſame infirmity; Hear then, tho' the ſyllables be torn by pincers from my tongue; I——miſerable wretch——I——the utterance will choak me! am in love! (*he ſtops Flaxland's mouth*) and now in God's name, hold thy tongue, hold thy tongue.

Flax. Thou in love? ha! ha! ha!

Erlach. There we have it; he laughs at me!

Flax. No I am truly ſorry; had I but known it ſooner——

Erlach. Thou would'ſt have overperſuaded the girl: bleſſings on the wedding feaſt; ſhe ſhall never know it: and ſhould a whiſper eſcape thy tongue, thou and I muſt pull a trigger.

Flax. Who could ever imagine any thing like this—at thy age the infection is ſeldom catching!

Erlach. Quite right!

Flax. One ſhould beware of being enſlaved by one's own heart.

Erlach. Proceed——

Flax. Better to piſtol one's ſelf.

Erlach. May be——

Flax. Forgive this malicious raillery, and truſt me tho' I eſteem Hugel as an excellent young man, I had rather have ſeen thee in his place.

Erlach. Baby-pap!

Flax. But now let me tell thee——

Erlach. I will know nothing! do me the favour to ſend for poſt-horſes.

Flax. How! thou wilt in good earneſt——

Erlach. Away!—and ſhould'ſt thou peradventure know of ſome wilderneſs unhaunted by women, tell it me: (*he looks about*) Ah! now we have it—here ſhe comes, with the little

head drooping, lovelorn, and ſentimentally, and I dare ſay, ſhe will aſk me my bleſſing.

Flax. Whom ?

Erlach. (*Without turning, points his hand behind him*)

Flax. I ſee nobody but Emma.

Erlach. Why there !—Ah ! brother—that the laſs could not avoid being eight years older.

Flax. Did'ſt ſpeak of her ?—

Erlach. Of whom elſe ?—

Flax. Herr von Hugel's bride !

Erlach. (*peevishly*) Why that I know too well already.

Flax. Ha ! ha ! ha ! this is precious——dear Erlach, I leave thee alone with her. [*Exit.*

Erlach. (*alone*) The fellow is making game of me—ſo it goes, we do but fall in love, and, lo ! a ſtorm of miſery burſts upon us. He leaves me alone with her : but does it follow I will ſpeak to her ? No ! I go my ways ; farewell Ma'amſelle, and ſhould you again be buried up to the chin in ſoot, may I be damn'd, if——Erlach ! Erlach ! one ſhould not for the world be guilty of ſwearing—— ſhe comes nearer—What is that to me ? Should I go, ſhe may conceive I am running away from her. No, no, Ma'amſelle, it is not ſo dangerous as that neither —we will ſit ourſelves down in this arbour—may be, ſhe is again on the look out for her ſomebody. (*He ſeats himſelf and plays with his cane in the ſand.*)

SCENE II. EMMA *and* ERLACH.

Emma. (*enters without perceiving Erlach, approaches ſlowly the linden trees, feelingly contemplates them, throws both arms round one tree, kneels, and exclaims with emotion*) Here ſhed I the firſt tears of joy ! God, I thank thee !

Erlach. (*to himſelf, with his chin reſting on his cane*) Ay, ay, it was here where ſhe firſt found him.

Emma. My warmeſt wiſhes are fulfilled.

Erlach. Warmeſt wiſhes, does that become a maiden ?——

Emma. Happy days to come——

Erlach. That is the queſtion !

Emma. To forget, is all I want.

Erlach. And Erlach before every one.

Emma. (*riſing*) I muſt find out the generous Erlach.

Erlach. My turn is come at laſt.

Emma. How glad he will be.

Erlach. I doubt it.

Emma. (*turning round diſcovers Erlach*) Ah !——are you there ?

Erlach. *(drily, without changing his place)* Here am I.

Emma. *(playfully)* You have been liſtening to me.

Erlach. It is not my way.

Emma. Do you already know?

Erlach. O yes!

Emma. Has the Counſellor told you that——

Erlach. Yes, the Counſellor has told me.

Emma. But you do not partake in my happineſs?

Erlach. O yes— why not? I wiſh you joy.

Emma. So cold?

Erlach. I cannot diſſemble, and to ſpeak plainly, I naturally expected earlier information.

Emma. Earlier!—how was that poſſible?

Erlach. Why did you ſend me away?—what paſſ'd between you, might be eaſily conceived.

Emma. I cannot comprehend you.

Erlach. The way of the world, Friendſhip imprints her pretenſions on the heart, as I do theſe letters on the ſand:—a breath of love!—and all is obliterated.

Emma. Can my benefactor condemn this love?

Erlach. O! no! What is it to me! I have no voice in your election.

Emma. My election!

Erlach. You love him, he is a deſerving man—prudent—in good circumſtances—

Emma. He! him! What can this mean?——We miſunderſtand one another.

Erlach. Not at all, the Counſellor informs me the buſineſs is ſettled with Herr von Hugel.

Emma. O! yes.

Erlach. Well then?

Emma. What is that to me?

Erlach. What is that to you? that is curious.

Emma. I have been brought up with Minna; we love one another as ſiſters; and ſo far do I rejoice at her good fortune.

Erlach. Minna! what has ſhe to do with it?

Emma. Why, ſhe is the bride.

Erlach. Are you making a joke of me?

Emma. Heaven forbid!

Erlach. You convers'd with Herr von Hugel——

Emma. In Minna's name.

Erlach. And gave conſent———

Emma. For Minna.

Erlach. Indeed! in good earneſt? and the fervent gratitude you expreſs'd at this tree———could mere friendſhip

produce ſuch tranſport? Bleſſed then be he who ſhares your love!

Emma. How come you, to touch that ſtring?

Erlach. Moſt naturally; by my ſoul! I feel myſelf ſo ſurpriſed! but ſo much the better; the ſoldier, in the heat of the battle, forgets the danger.

Emma. Dear Captain, you ſpeak in riddles.

Erlach. May be; ſay but a half word, and I will ſolve the riddle.

Emma. Your coldneſs, your reſerve, your tranſport! it is well we are unobſerved.

Erlach. Why?

Emma. (playful) A third perſon might have charg'd you with the ſhame, of being in—love.

Erlach. Shame!—yes, yes,—it is ſhame at my years!

Emma. Rather ſay on your principles.

Erlach. I forbid all ridicule.

Emma. How ſhould I preſume———?

Erlach. To be aſhamed of abandoning abſurd notions, is falſe ſhame; in one word, have you not remark'd——?

Emma. What?

Erlach. How! Nothing?———

Emma. No!

Erlach. A moſt unlucky affair has happened to me.

Emma. To you!

Erlach. Do but gueſs.

Emma. How can I?

Erlach. Try, for it will be harder for me to explain than you to divine.

Emma. If I were vain———

Erlach. Well!

Emma. I ſhould be apt to ſuſpect———

Erlach. What?

Emma. You will laugh———

Erlach. By my ſoul! I am in no laughing mood. Well, what would you ſuſpect were you vain?

Emma. That—but pray forgive me.

Erlach. Be quick—I forgive all.

Emma. That you are in love with me.

Erlach. So! At laſt it is out.

Emma. I permit you to laugh at me.

Erlach. And I permit thee to be vain—do'ſt underſtand me?

Emma. Vain only! My benefactor's love would make me more proud than vain.

Erlach. And Mr. benefactor will profit as little by pride as

by vanity—no more of this—I do not like it—if thou haſt an idea of owing me any thing, let us balance accounts.

Emma. I, poor girl!

Erlach. Ay, ay, who will not pay pleads poverty—it is beautiful, good, ſenſible—but poor, poor——

Emma. For what I am and have, thanks to you.

Erlach. Baby-pap!—that is not the queſtion, I ſee thou wilt not underſtand me, I am too old, too plain for thee, ſpeak out.

Emma. Why this ſounds almoſt——

Erlach. Like an offer of marriage—why ſo, now we are at length come to time and place.

Emma. (*after a pauſe*) You are marking this day, as the moſt memorable of my life.

Erlach. So! how is that meant? yes or no?

Emma. I eſteem you highly.

Erlach. Nothing further.

Emma. A female ſeldom acknowledges more—had you permitted me to give the word, you would 'ere now have known that within theſe few hours, a third perſon has claimed a ſhare of my heart.

Erlach. Share! that is not my way.

Emma. And you muſt now addreſs yourſelf to my mother!

Erlach. To your mother?

Emma. Your friend's ſiſter, who formerly emigrated with her huſband to America, and there in one hapleſs night, loſt houſe, home, and child.

Erlach. Loſt! how?

Emma. The lamented child, whom a gallant ſoldier reſcued from the ſmoaking ruins, is named Amelia Moreau, it is her who delighted in your martial apparel—and ſince ſhe could think and feel, has adored her noble-minded deliverer. The man who raiſed me from the aſhes, acted bravely, but peradventure, many a one in the ſame predicament, would have ſaved the weeping child from death, and abandon'd it afterwards to its fate; but the man, who during eight years, has ſhar'd with me his ſlender appointment—O! for him, thanks are a poor return.—Praiſe and fame may reward heroic deeds, but the nobleſt actions are not always the moſt brilliant; a great ſacrifice is more eaſily accompliſhed in one hour, than a thouſand ſmall ſweet courteſies, during the ſpace of eight years.

Erlach. (*who, while ſhe is ſpeaking with animation, gives various ſigns of impatience*) Have you done?

Emma. Not yet, Captain Erlach—(*with inward feeling*) not yet friend—benefactor—brother!

Erlach. Brother! I underſtand ——

Emma. No, you do not underſtand me! If my affections were entangled, I would ſighing confeſs—generous man, pity me, I cannot love you: but thanks to God, my heart is unfettered, eſteem and good will, friendſhip and gratitude; yes, theſe ſenſations are combined into one, and that one is love.

Erlach. My girl! Is that thy earneſt?

Emma. With an Erlach, no precipitancy need be fear'd, neither was your propoſal utterly unexpected; the nipping coldneſs with which you left me, when I ſought and found Herr von Hugel, intimated to me, what perhaps you yourſelf ſcarcely imagined; my heart throbb'd high at the idea, to recompence my benefactor, and the life which he preſerved, to devote to the happineſs of his life; theſe flattering ideas excited hopes, wiſhes, and now dear captain, without affectation, without falſe ſhame:—if a heart, full of innocence, a grateful confidence, and the endeavour to deſerve you, can ſuffice, I ſhall moſt willingly become your bride.

Erlach. (*ſeizes overjoyed her hand*) Girl! girl! what doſt thou make of me? I could fall on my knees before thee, had I not ſo often fondled thee on my knee; here then ſtand I, would fain ſpeak and cannot, and faulter before a being, who, eight years ago, was no taller than this roſe buſh; but one word for all, thou art my wife, my deareſt wife! Why, let them laugh—ha, ha, ha! I too will laugh; ſee here, ſee here, and diſguiſe your envy under feign'd ſmiles, go your way, ſhe is mine!—Erlach returns to his country, and the Alps ſhall reverberate his ſhouts, for never was his heart ſo full of ecſtacy.—(*eagerly and playfully he takes her hand under his arm*) Yes, my good girl, we will buy us a farm, an Alpine cot, with the friendly ſunbeams ſporting on our ſoil, where aromatic roots exhale health, and the wild roſes careleſsly bloom like thy cheeks—there will we mingle in the ſong and dance of a true hearted peaſantry.——Huzza! Erlach and his matchleſs wife. (*He lifts her up and ſwings her round*)

Emma. Dear Erlach, my mother approaches—

Erlach. Whom? thy mother:—I had nearly forgotten the romance, and is it then true?—pardon me if I delay inquiring how all this hangs together—It ſeems to me as if I were with Emma alone in the world, and had no concern with the reſt of mankind.

Emma. Let us beg her bleſſing!

Erlach. Ay, ay! (*he throws away hat and cane, takes Emma in his arms, and carries her to meet her mother half way.*)

Minna. Indeed! why little couſin, thou doſt not open thy lips.

Erlach. Why ſhould ſhe? ſhe has ſaid yes, and that ſuffices.

Minna. Often a word too much. How, dear aunt—have you conſented?

Erlach. Why ſhould ſhe not conſent! hey?

Minna. A woman hater!

Moreau. So much the more glory for my Emma.

Minna. A rough hewn ſoldier——

Erlach. Heart of oak is alſo rough, but the tree ſpreads its ſhadow far and wide.

Minna. He is ever ſcolding and bluſtering——

Erlach. God beholds the heart.

Minna. Yes, becauſe he can penetrate it——

Erlach. So can Emma; (*with innate ſenſibility laying her hand on his breaſt*) is it not ſo Emma? thou ſee'ſt my heart.

Emma. Dear Erlach, it beats for me.

Minna. Ah me! my poor, dear little friend is loſt!

Erlach. Let her prate.

Minna. The gallant Captain is a ſecond Cæſar—he comes—ſees—and conquers!

Emma. Have I then known him only ſince this morning?

Minna. But—he—thee?

Erlach. Pſha! when a ſpark falls into a powder barrel, it blows up in the twinkling of an eye.

Minna. Pſha! I did not know that men's hearts were powder barrels:—but to what cannot be undone, we muſt adminiſter the utmoſt conſolation; and as you have proceeded together to ſuch extremes, this ſolemn ſalutation (*curtſeying*) may imitate, that,—no, no, that is not the purpoſe:—Come hither deareſt Emma (*kiſſes and embraces her*) haſt thou underſtood me?

Hugel. (*gives Erlach his hand*) Captain Erlach, I am moſt heartily glad——

Erlach. (*ſhakes his hand*) Why right! an Anglo German greeting; this language I have learnt from honeſty. Well children, when ſhall be the wedding day?

Hugel. Methinks to-morrow.

Erlach. Why not to-day?

Emma. Within the month.

Minna. In about a year.

Hugel. Who ſhall decide?

Minna. Our good aunt.

Moreau. Have a care child, I always take the part of the weakeſt.

Minna. That means us girls.

Erlach. By no means.

Hugel. At leaſt not as brides.

Moreau. Aſk my brother, and here he comes apropos.

SCENE V. *The* COUNSELLOR *and the former.*

Minna. (runs to meet him) Papa, the weſtern wind has brought an influenza into your garden, every thing pairs itſelf, every thing will marry.

Flax. So much the better.

Minna. Our platonic——our growler——our woman hater.———

Erlach. Pleaſant diſtinctions!

Minna. For thirty years and upwards he has made his head an ice-cellar, and heaped frozen apothegma the one upon the other, but yon blue eyes have pierced the gloom, and lo! the ice is inſtantly melted.

Flax. So much the better.——

Erlach. Yes, my worthy uncle, if you have no objection.

Flax. My dear nephew, thou haſt better luck than thou deſerveſt.

Erlach. The Spaniards embark for America, to find gold, I have brought from thence a precious treaſure.

Flax. Why ſo ſilent dear ſiſter?

Moreau. I ought to rejoice in the ſcene before me, but alas! my ſon! my only ſon!

Erlach. Your ſon? how Emma, haſt thou yet a brother?

Emma. Would to heaven, I could call him brother.

Erlach. Where is he? who is he?

Moreau. No more of this! my heart bleeds: tell it him, when you are alone.

Flax. Right ſiſter, let us not cloud the preſent cheerful hour; I am glad to perceive it undiſturbed by the ſwarm of loungers.

Minna. Mamma feigned a head-ache, and the one vaniſhed after the other.

Flax. Where is thy mother? nothing here is wanting but her preſence.

Minna. She has retired into her cloſet.

Flax. Retired from us! what can this mean?

Erlach. My life upon it, nothing bad.

Moreau. She received me with the moſt heartfelt affection: ſhe appeared overjoyed at my unlooked for appearence: providence, ſaid ſhe, rewards me beforehand; but dear ſiſter go,

within an hour, I can moſt cordially welcome you, within an hour, I hope to ſhew myſelf deſerving of this bleſſing.

Flax. Incomprehenſible! enigmatical!

Erlach. What wilt thou give me to put thee on the ſcent?

SCENE VI. JOHN, *and the former.*

John. (*ſobbing*) Ah! your honor, my good maſter!

Flax. What ails thee?

John. I have lived almoſt half a century in your ſervice.——

Flax. Well?——

John. When a lad, I rooted up the weeds long ere they ſhewed themſelves; to be ſure I was then ſo little, and ſtupid, that I oft' ſcraped up the primroſe and left the weed.——

Flax. My good old fellow, that happens frequently to children of larger growth, but why weepeſt thou?

John. Becauſe I am in danger to be myſelf thrown upon the muck-heap, like garbage: and, is it not ſo your honor, tho' no peach tree, I am no nettle in your garden.

Flax. Who moleſts thee?

John. Hitherto, to be ſure, I am excepted; but when one tree after the other is felled, my turn muſt come at laſt; Monſieur Roſa, the Friſeur; Maſter Beefſtick, the Maitre d'Hotell; Signor Maccaroni, the cook; and Heer Wantman, the porter, are all diſcharged.

Flax. What?

Erlach. Aha!

John. One after the other is called in, receives his half year's wages, and muſt pack up his bundle; the little conceited French mam'ſelle is now within, and when ſhe is diſpatched, mayhap my turn may come; remember Sir, I am an aged tree, that will not bear tranſplanting: beſides, I have young ſcyons ſhooting up, and what is to become of them?

Flax. Be at eaſe: thou haſt carried me in thy arms, helped me to plunder many a bird's neſt, and while I live, thy neſt ſhall remain unruffled.

John. A thouſand thanks! neither is it any ſparrow's neſt from which to protect the cherries with netting.——

Flax. But I cannot comprehend—

Erlach. Thou wilt ſoon comprehend—yonder comes thy incomparable wife—away! away! let's leave a clear ſtage; for a matrimonial ſcene approaches, which muſt not be performed before ſpectators:—come, let us ſee if the muſicians have already had leave of abſence? we muſt ſuſpend the furlough, for I will dance to-day, tho' I were myſelf to grumble

the time. *The others Madame Morrow his arm, the others follow.*]

Jan. My old woman fits forlorn on the bleech and moistens the linen with her tears—I must home, mumfell her: do not cry old one, fo long as we live, we shall grow our vegetables in this garden. [*Exit.*

[*The Count his remains in a profound reverie, and scarcely perceives he is left alone.*]

SCENE VII.

Mrs. Flax. (*in a neat plain morning dress, she slowly approaches the Count, and lays her hand gently on his shoulder*) So deep in thought!

Flax. Ah! my love, I was thinking of thee.

Mrs. Flax. And yet look so gloomy.

Flax. Thy countenance disperses every wrinkle, except those which are impressed by age.

Mrs. Flax. Domestic happiness, gives even to old age an unwrinkled forehead.

Flax. Then I should resemble a young man.

Mrs. Flax. I appeal to thy heart—thou deceivest me.

Flax. How! dost thou discredit my love?

Mrs. Flax. No: but something more than love is required to constitute a happy union.

Flax. More than love?

Mrs. Flax. Love adorns the spring of life, and marriage it's summer: but they who in dalliance, neglect to sow the seeds of confidence, how can they expect in autumn to gather the fruit of domestic bliss.

Flax. (*smiling*) Wherefore this poetic effusion?

Mrs. Flax. Poetry! well then, poetry is the attendant of truth, and must assist in decorating her mistress.

Flax. From thy mouth I prefer truth unadorned.

Mrs. Flax. Very gallant—As thou art in the vein to compliment me, allow me to ask how you like me now?

Flax. Thou art so simply, so neatly dress, thou lookest most lovely.

Mrs. Flax. Handsomer than usual?

Flax. Much handsomer in my eyes.

Mrs. Flax. Why then art thou incessantly lavishing upon me silks and taffeta? Why dost thou constrain me to follow every whim of fashion?

Flax. The round of visits is numerous.

Mrs. Flax. But why must I keep up this round of visits?

Flax. To add to thy amusements.

Mrs. Flax. Who makes thee believe, that I find elſewhere more amuſement than in thy company :—this ſimple diſhabille—O ! I well know it becomes me better than a galla ſuit —this is wholly for thee my dear—modeſt, unaſſuming, (*ſmiling*) the duſt of jealouſy will not cling to theſe folds.

Flax. Jealouſy !—I hope thou doſt not think me tainted.

Mrs. Flax. Why not ? if thou loveſt me.

Flax. But my confidence.

Mrs. Flax. Why even there it ſticks :—Oh ! my good man, thou diſſembleſt before me a confidence, and tormenteſt thyſelf in private with frightful chimeras—was I not then juſtified in aſſerting, that love alone did not ſuffice to make the marriage ſtate happy ?

Flax. (*confuſed*) Thou wrongeſt me.

Mrs. Flax. No, no, I know all, and ſpare thee the confeſſion—a painful wound muſt be healed, without too much uſe of the probe or the knife—ſuffer me only to add, it is thyſelf who was ever engaging me in the great world—it is thyſelf, who kept open houſe for coxcombs and paraſites—who feared thy young wife would be vapoured in thy houſe—That was falſe diſcretion—Whilſt complying with thy deſire abroad, evil dreams haunted thee at home—but thou waſt aſhamed of them, and that was falſe ſhame :—Man and wife ſhould not even conceal their dreams from one another—a look would have been enough—I might perhaps have indulged a little laugh againſt thee—but ſhould moſt cheerfully have offered a worthleſs ſacrifice to thy peace of mind. Oh ! how many a marriage union is deſtroyed, becauſe the band of confidence was not tied heart to heart. How oft the torch of diſcord becomes unextinguiſhable, becauſe huſband or wife ſmothered the firſt ſpark.

Flax. Angelic woman !—forgive me !

Mrs. Flax. I forgive thee, but upon one condition—that thou wilt be pleaſed henceforward, not to move a ſtep without me ; when thou writeſt, I will ſet by thee with my work-bag —and when thou haſt finiſhed, we will continue together.

Flax. Inſtead of puniſhing, thou art rewarding me, my love.

Mrs. Flax. O !—I have now thought of a puniſhment :—thou preferreſt the town, but I think the country moſt engaging—only once within three years, have we viſited our farm —that is unnatural—and as a penance thou muſt linger there with me the whole ſummer.

Flax. Caroline !—this is too much.

Mrs. Flax. I cannot ſpare thee—and thou muſt moreover be

ſatisfied with houſehold fare, for I have diſcharged our privileg'd poiſon-mongers.

Flax. Thou haſt, I underſtand, made ſeveral œconomical retrenchments.

Mrs. Flax. A complete revolution.

Flax. Thou wilt thereby diminiſh thy pleaſures.

Mrs. Flax. And thereby acquire my heart's content:—man! man! muſt I alſo learn thro' a friend, that the luxuries thou waſt daily recommending—the ſuperfluity, in which thou madeſt me indulge, were purchaſed at the expence of thy peace of mind—that I was wronging thy children, to reward by the robbery every ſpecies of ennui.

Flax. Why ſurely Erlach——

Mrs. Flax. Thank God, for ſending him to my ſalvation—without him, I ſhould have been hurried to perdition, and awoke too late!—Thou wicked man!—that again was thy fault, the want of confidence:—in thy opinion, women were incapable of eſtimating the value of a worthy man, unleſs his hands were ever loaded with preſents, like the ſubjects of an Eaſtern Potentate. Learn to know us better:—a wife is prouder in an eſtimable huſband, than in a pair of diamond earrings, and prefers going unnoticed on foot, poſſeſſing her huſband's affection, than without it, attracting the eyes of a gaping croud, in a dazzling phæton.

Flax. (*falls at her feet*) Caroline!

Mrs. Flax. (*ſmiling*) Dear Flaxland, I muſt for the firſt time remind thee, that thou art turn'd of forty—kneeling does not become thee.

Flax. I have indeed misjudged thee!—pardon me.

Mrs Flax. (*raiſes him and embraces him*) It is paſt—we will retire into the country, ſhall we not? and in a few years, my diſſipation will be recovered. Oh!—how many an eſtabliſhment falls to ruin, becauſe the huſband is aſhamed to diſcloſe to his wife, the true ſtate of his circumſtances—my experience this day, has ſo innately convinced me of this melancholy truth, that were I now ſtanding before a numerous aſſembly, I ſhould extend my arms, and glowing with philanthropy, ſhould addreſs each father of a family—I truſt thy wife—thou tottereſt perchance on the brink of an abyſs—confidence may ſave thee—baniſh falſe ſhame, this monſter of vanity and arrogance!—truſt thy wife, thy trueſt friend!—and thou wilt be rewarded with conſolation for the paſt, with advice and aſſiſtance for the future.

Flax. Wife! what a ſpirit gives utterance thro' thee!

Mrs. Flax. I ſhould be a low-minded wife, if love and duty could not inſpire me.

Flax. I ought to be aſhamed, that a woman of five-and twenty, ſhould inſtruct a man of my mature years:—but this were again falſe ſhame, which ſhall be for ever baniſhed from my boſom:—from this moment, thou like God, ſhall behold my heart's inmoſt thoughts—even thoſe, that ſhun the light of day, will I whiſper in thy ear—and whenever a weakneſs would lurk concealed, the remembrance of this hour, ſhall draw it forth, for thy good natur'd merriment and forgiveneſs.

Mrs. Flax. O! God! I thank thee!—it is accompliſh'd—my huſband is once more mine.

Flax. Thine for ever!—but deareſt Caroline, do not imagine, that thro' deranged circumſtances thou art compelled to bury thy youth in the country—my property is yet ample.

Mrs. Flax. Bury!—the enjoyment of nature and one's ſelf, men call burying—well then, the nightingales ſhall chaunt our requiem.

Flax. My dear Caroline, thou art not familiariz'd with ſolitude.

Mrs. Flax. Thro' conjugal affection, the wife adopts another mode of life, with the ſame facility ſhe changes a faſhion:—a few years ſince, I fancied only a large hat could become me and the hats were never large enough to my mind—I now think this faſhion frightful, and am only pleaſed with myſelf in the ſmalleſt hat—Thus will it be in this caſe—four weeks in the counry, and a city life will appear like a large hat—and I never ſhall be able to comprehend how I could endure myſelf in it.

Flax. So be it then, if this is thy deſire.

Mrs. Flax. Here haſt thou my hand.

Flax. I embrace it with extasy!

Mrs. Flax. Domeſtic retirement ſhall be our delight.

Flax. And peace in the boſom of my beloved!

Mrs. Flax. In the arms of affection——

Flax. Seaſon'd by friendſhip——

Mrs. Flax. Embelliſh'd by nature——

Flax. Nearly loſt, thro' falſe ſhame——

Mrs. Flax. Thro' confidence reſtored——

Flax. (*folds her in his arms*) And never more to be abandoned——

Mrs. Flax. Never! never!

SCENE VIIA ERLACH *and the former.*

Erlach. (*indignant*) Scoundrel?—whoever breaks his neck, ſhall be amply rewarded.

Fitz. What [illegible] brother?

[illegible]

Fitz. Of whom are [illegible] speaking?

[illegible] Valentin [illegible], my [illegible]

Fitz. [illegible] The brother [illegible]

[illegible] Emma's brother [illegible] mother [illegible] Madame [illegible] a [illegible] that might have [illegible] the lady [illegible] Emma [illegible] brother, and I a [illegible] the agitated [illegible] hands, seem'd [illegible] arms; it was truly [illegible] the wretch, to be allied to the [illegible] family. But if this be the only alternative——And [illegible] his shoulders, [illegible] like a snake, and [illegible] out of the gate: I [illegible] after him, fellow, among all [illegible] shame the most [illegible] is, to be ashamed of [illegible] parents, [illegible] wants the resolution, to brave the [illegible] raillery of a few country mendicants.

Fitz. My poor sister! where is she?

Enoch. The girls are endeavoring to dry her tears. Here she comes, behold, how quickly a mother's affliction blanches the cheek.

SCENE XI. Madame Moreau, Enoch, Minna, Emma, *and the former.*

Flaz (meeting her) My good sister!

Moreau. I beseech thee brother, do not mention him, let no one name him more; you could not but condemn him, and his mother could not attempt his defence. He is far gone indeed, when maternal affection must be silent! Ah! had he died in the cradle, I might have exclaimed, death has robb'd me of a lovely boy!

Emma. (caressing her) You have yet two children.

Moreau. The lost child is always the most lamented.

Flaz. We must not expect cloudless days!

Moreau. Forgive me, I will not murmur: God has been to-day so indulgent to me! Ah what was I, but a few hours past? Come to my arms, my dearest children! *(she embraces Enoch and Emma, and drops her head on her daughter's [illegible],*

Erlach. I pledge you my hand, mother, I will re-inſtate you the boy!

Mrs. Flax. What is it I ſee? our woman-hater converted?

Minna. Theſe ſudden convertites are not always the moſt ſecure.

Erlach. Miſs Wiſdom, learn from me, that from all proverbs and ſayings, love is ever excepted.

Minna. But after having ſo often vowed eternal hatred to the ſex.

Hugel. To the ſex, but not to angels

Erlach. Well ſaid, my good coz.

Minna. (to Hugel) Sweet Sir, it is written, you muſt have only eyes for me:—if this applies to the green bridal ſapling, what muſt not one expect from the mature ſeaſon'd wedding tree?—Take my father as an example—he is no longer a youngſter, has been three years married, and behold how his eyes dwell enamoured on my mother!

Flax. Emulate her example, ſhe has to-day made me the happieſt of men! Rejoice, Erlach, we remove into the country.

Erlach. Amen.

Mrs. Flax. Thank him, my dear Flaxland.

Erlach. Huſh!—do not betray me.

Flax. A friend thanks not with words.

Erlach. Cheerly my hearts!—here is a happy group—an angel would not bluſh to deſcend among us—your ears have been regaled this morning with many a ditty—now, to pleaſe me, you muſt all join in the ſong—ſtrike up muſicians—joy! planet of paradiſe!—Elyſium's child!

The muſic behind the ſcenes, plays Schillers Ode to joy, Flaxland takes his wife under the right, and his Siſter under the left arm, joined on one ſide by Erlach and Emma, and on the other, by Minna and Hugel.—Thus encircled they ſing:

Ye, who in life's lottery bleſt,
Where friendſhip, kindred ſouls unites;
Ye of endearing wives poſſeſt,
Hymen, to this feaſt invites!

The curtain drops, and the ſounds die gradually away.

FINIS.

THE

EAST INDIAN:

A COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

As Performed at the Theatre-Royal, Drury-Lane.

By M. G. LEWIS, Esq. M. P.

Author of the MONK, CASTLE SPECTRE, &c.

Quadringenta tibi si quis Deus, aut similis Diis,
Et melior fatis donaret, homuncio quantus
Ex nihilo fieres, quantus Virronis amicus!
" Da Trebio!"—" Pone ad Trebium!"—" Vis, Frater, ab ipsis
" Illibus?"—O nummi, vobis hunc præstat honorem!
Vos estis Fratres!

JUVENAL, Sat. 5.

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AS PERFORMED AT THE THEATRE
NEW-YORK.

Dramatis Personæ.

Lord Listless,	- - - -	Mr. Jefferson.
Modish,	- - - - -	Mr. Tyler.
Rivers,	- - - - -	Mr. Hodgkinson.
Beauchamp,	- - - -	Mr. Martin.
Walsingham,	- - - -	Mr. Hallam.
Frank,	- - - - -	Mr. Powel.
Squeez'em,	- - - - -	Mr. Hogg.
Fripoueau,	- - - -	Mr. Fox.
Trifle,	- - - - -	Mr. Hallam, jun.
John,	- - - - -	Mr. M'Donald.
Robert,	- - - - -	Mr. Leonard.
Lady Clara Modish	- - -	Mrs. Melmoth.
Mrs. Ormand,	- - - -	Mrs. Powel.
Miss Chatteral,	- - - -	Mrs. Hogg.
Zorayda,	- - - - -	Mrs. Hodgkinson.
Mrs. Slip-slop,	- - - -	Miss. Brett.
Lady Hubbub,	- - - -	Miss Hogg.
Mrs. Blabell,	- - - -	Mrs, Brett.
Mrs. Tiffany,	- - - -	Miss Harding.
Anne,	- - - - -	Mrs. King.

PREFACE.

THE Plot of this Comedy, as far as regards Rivers's visit to Modish and Mrs. Ormand, was taken from the Novel of Sidney Biddulph; Mr. Sheridan had already borrowed the same incident from the same source, and employed it (though in a different manner) in the "School for Scandal."

THE "East Indian" was admirably well acted from beginning to end, particularly the part of Rivers by Mr. Kemble; nothing was overcharged, nothing under-acted. Indeed, to call his performance *acting*, is doing it injustice: It was nature throughout.

THIS Comedy was written before I was sixteen. It was performed last season for the benefits of Mrs. Jordon and Mrs. Powell, and, in consequence of the approbation with which it was received, was brought forward again in last December. It was again received with applause, for which I thank the public; the succeeding representations did not prove attractive, for which I here make my acknowledgements to Mr. Sheridan, who blocked up my road, mounted on his great tragic war-horse Pizarro, and trampled my humble pad-nag of a

Comedy under foot without the least compunction. My readers must decide, whether my Play merited so transient an existence; it is unnecessary to say, that I am quite of the contrary opinion.

M. G. LEWIS.

Jan. 14, 1800.

PROLOGUE.

WRITTEN By the AUTHOR.

IN life's gay spring, while yet the careless hours
Dance light on blooming beds of early flowers,
Ere knowledge of the world has taught the mind
To sorrow for itself and shun mankind,
In sweet vain dreams still fancy bids the boy
Doat on fair prospects of ideal joy;
Life's choicest fruits then court his eager hand;
Each eye is gentle, and each voice is bland;
False friendship prompts no sigh, and draws no tear,
And love seems scarce more beauteous, than sincere!

Ere sixteen years had wing'd their wanton flight,
While yet his head was young, and heart was light,
Our author plann'd these scenes; and while he drew,
How bright each color seem'd, each line how true.
Gods! with what rapture every speech he spoke!
Gods! how he chuckled as he penn'd each joke!
And when at length his ravish'd eyes survey
That wondrous work complete—a Five Act play,
His youthful heart how self applauses swell!
—"It isn't perfect, but its vastly well!"—

Since then, with many a pang, our Bard has bought
More just decision, and less partial thought;
Kind vanity no longer blinds his sight,
His fillet falls, and lets in odious light.
Time bids the darling work its leaves expand,
Each flower Parnassian withers in his hand;
Stern judgment every latent fault detects,
And all its fancied beauties prove defects.

Yet, for she thinks some scenes possess an art
To please the fancy and to melt the heart,

That's hard to say—or to right appear,
That's hard in Heaven, our Jordan here.*
So first—his hope, or weak he thinks his cause,
Our merits may he dares not ask applause;
He may cry out that with indulgence new,
You've seen him patiently and seen him through:
Then—if his piece proves wondrous, never shame it;
But damn it, gentle friends—Oh! damn it! damn it!

* *The Comedy was first performed for the benefit of Mr. Jordan.*

THE

EAST INDIAN.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Room in an Hotel.*

WALSINGHAM *is seated by a table;* ROBERT *waiting.*

WALSINGHAM.

BEAUCHAMP, say you?

Rob. I think, that's the gentleman's name, Sir.

Wal. Show him up—[*Exit Robert.*]—I'am glad that he's returned to England; for, though a young man, and a gay man, Beauchamp is among the few whom I esteem.

Enter BEAUCHAMP.

My dear Ned!

Beau. Mr. Walsingham!—This pleasure is quite unexpected; but where have you been concealed these hundred years? I was afraid, that Cynthia wearied of her Endymion had pitched upon *you* for his successor, and believed you at this moment an inhabitant of the moon.

Wal. No, no, my young friend; the goddess has too much taste to select such an old weather-beaten fellow for a Cecisbeo. But if you seriously ask, what I've been doing for these last three years, you must know, I've been fool-hunting.

Beau. Fool-hunting?

Wal. Yes, being of an adust cynical constitution, infinite laughter is absolutely necessary for my health; for this purpose my physician prescribed me a course of fools, and truly I've reaped great benefit from his advice.

Beau. Why then leave Great Britain? Heaven knows, a scarcity of fools is not one of our wants!

Wal. True; but the growth of English absurdity for the year '95 not being to my taste, I determined to change my fools, as other invalids change the air; but after all I must give the preference to the folly of my own country.

Beau. Your own country is very much obliged to you; but since this is your taste, I've a superb feast for you in Lord Littless.

Wal. What, your uncle?

Beau. No; to my sorrow he sleeps with his fore-fathers, while my noble cousin possesses his title and estate, and, what is worst, has me entirely in his power.

Wal. How so?

Beau. 'Tis a tedious story; but the short of it is, that when I married, my generous uncle discharged my debts to the tune of £.3000: unluckily he neglected to destroy my acknowledgement, which falling into his son's hands, the present Earl wisely keeps it, and calls himself my sole creditor. Discharge it for some time I cannot; but, however, unless we disagree, he will not press me for immediate payment.

Wal. Well, well, and even if he should, we'll find means to satisfy him; and so away with that gloomy face, dear Ned! As soon as I saw you, I guessed that something was wrong; but I'm glad 'twas nothing more than a pecuniary difficulty.

Beau. Would to Heaven, it were!

Wal. Hey? why what other cause—

Beau. Oh! Mr. Whlsingham, how shall I tell you.....

Wal. Out with it!

Beau. That I have been..... That I still am..... a villain!

Wal. I don't believe one word of it: he, who dares own that he has been a villain, must needs already have ceased to be one.

Beau. Hear me then, and judge for yourself—You knew well the character of the woman, to whose fate, while I was still a stripling, accident not affection united mine.

Wal. Yes, and a miserable life she led you!

Beau. Jealous without love, profuse without generosity, negligent in her dress, violent in her temper, coarse in her manners,

with no virtue but that one which she owed to constitution, not to principle, during three years she rendered my home an hell. My patience was at length exhausted; I made over to her the remnants of an estate which her extravagance had ruined, bade this domestic fiend an eternal farewell, and sailed, under the assumed name of Dorimant, to India.

Wal. I see no harm as yet. Lived with her three years? I wouldn't have lived with her three days..... No! not to have buried her on the fourth.

Beau. Soon after my arrival, it was my chance to save the life of the famous Mortimer, who....

Wal. The Nabob, whose immense wealth.....

Beau. The same. This procured me admission to his house; where I saw his daughter: She was lovely and grateful to me for the preservation of her father's life; opportunities of seeing each other were frequent, and in an unguarded moment..... yet heaven can witness to my intentions!..... in an unguarded moment!..... I—I was a villain!

Wal. (shaking his head.)—Little better, I must say!

Beau. Her weakness and *my* perfidy were soon discovered. Marry her, I could not; her father's wrath was dreadful; she sought a refuge from it in *my* arms, and fled with me from India.

Wal. From India, and from her father? Young man! Young man! And what says your wife to all this?

Beau. Soon after our separation, I find that she went abroad, nor has she been heard of for near two years either by her banker, or her friends. Report says, that she is dead: If so, my hand is Zorayda's; and in the mean while she resides with my cousin, Lady Clara Modish.

Wal. Lady Clara! And how the devil came *she* to receive her?

Beau. The Devil made her, the great Devil of all! Money, man, darling money! Her Ladyship had been extravagant, and so I paid a gaming debt or two for her: besides this, the appearance of protecting a friendless orphan flatters that ostentatious sensibility, which it is her passion to display on every occasion.

Wal. But does she know the history of her protegée?

Beau. I was compelled to trust her with it under a promise of profound secrecy.

Wal. And how has she kept her promise?

Beau. Why really extremely well, considering she's a woman of fashion. She only confided it to her most intimate friends, who told it again to all their particular acquaintance, who repeated to every creature they knew; and now the whole town is informed of the whole transaction.

Wal. And you really have the heart to present this poor young creature to the world in a light so despicable?

Beau. Spare your reproaches, my dear, Sir, they have already been made by a very able advocate. You remember Modish's sister, Emily?

Wal. Young Ormand's widow—A charming creature!

Beau. She is interested about Zorayda, and has frequently written to me on this subject. Her remonstrances have carried with them conviction, and I am resolved to wait on her this morning to entreat her protection for Zorayda: and, should she grant it, to engage, cruel as it will be to the feelings of us both, no more to visit my love, till I can offer her my hand and fortune.

Wal. A very good resolution too: I long to see your goddess.

Beau. Come then to Lady Clara's, and behold the fictitious charms of modish beauty effaced by the native graces, the enchanting simplicity of my artless, my bewitching Zorayda! But as this is but weak attraction for a satyrist, if you still exclaim, "Thou, Folly, art my goddess!" I can promise you some diversion in your own way; for Lady Clara's table is seldom unsupplied with a plentiful banquet of fools.

Wal. Every table in town may be supplied with that article at a very small expence, I doubt not; for, after all my peregrinations in quest of folly, I am decided, that no country abounds more with that luxury than little England; where absurdities spring as kindly as mushrooms upon dunghills, and you can't turn a corner without starting a fool! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Lady Clara's.*

Enter MRS. TIFFANY *and* SLIP-SLOP.

Mrs. Tif. No really, Mrs. Slip-slop, I can't stay a moment longer, and I'm sure her La'ship will find the dress quite the thing.

Slip. Can't you confer your departure for one quarter of an hour, Mrs. Tiffany? My Lady'll be mightily aspirated, if you go without seeing her.

Mrs. Tiff. *(ringing the bell.)* Quite impossible! There's Lady Tawdry, Lady Tick, Miss Flash, and Lady Rachel Round-about all waiting for me at this very moment.

Enter JOHN.

My chariot and servants, if you please, Sir.— [*Exit John.*] —Good morning, Mrs. Slip-slop. [*Exit.*

Mrs. Slip. My chariot and servants!—Lud! Lud!—how I detest and extricate that conceited trollop! She affects to contemnify me too, and why? Sure my figure and hidication an't anterior to hers; and as to birth, I hope my contraction's are as extinguished as Mrs. Tiffany's, or truly I should be sorry for it!

Enter ZORAYDA.

Zor. Is the mantau-maker gone, Mrs. Slip-slop?

Mrs. Slip. Yes; but left this note for you, Miss. *(Zorayda reads.)* Superscribed, I see, to Miss Mandeville, though she knows well enough that's only a consumed name. Now do tell me, dear Miss, what is your right one? What is your real abomination?

Zor. Impertinent questions, Mrs. Slip-slop.

Mrs. Slip. Oh! but if you'll only tell me, I'll be so secret.....

Zor. Of that I'm certain, Mrs. Slip-slop; for I well believe—

> Thou wilt not utter what thou dost not know,
> And so far will I trust thee, gentle Slip-slop!

Mrs. Slip. So far, indeed!

Zor. Not a jot farther.

Enter JOHN.

John. Lord Listless. [*Exit.*

Mrs. Slip. *(aside.)* Miss keeps her secret as close as if

'twere a scheme she had prevented for paying off the natural debt, and was frightful that somebody would embellish her ideras.

[*Exit.*

Enter Lord LISTLESS.

Lord List. Quite alone, Miss Mandeville! Where's Clara?

Zor. Still at breakfast in her dressing-room. She slept ill, and left her bed late this morning.

Lord List. She was quite in the right: for my part I wonder why people leave their beds at all, for they only contrive to bore themselves and their acquaintance. Now I've some thoughts of going to bed one of these nights, and never getting up again.

Zor. Oh! pray, my Lord, put that scheme into execution, for the benefit of your friends as well as yourself.

Lord List. Yes, 'twould certainly take, for people imitate every thing I do so ridiculously, that 'pon my soul I'm bored to death with them; but, to say the truth, I'm bored with every thing and every body.

Zor. I should be sorry to increase your ennui, and so wish you good morning.

Lord List. No, no; stay, pray stay; for there's nothing I like so much as the company of Ladies.

Zor. *(drawing away her hand.)* I'm sorry that I can't return the compliment; but there's nothing I like so little as the company of Lords!

Lord List. Umph! Pert enough, 'pon my soul!

Enter Lady CLARA.

Lord List. Morning, Clara! You look frightful to-day.

Lady Clara. Do I? I dare say I do: for my nerves are in such a state!—Oh! and then I had such a dream!—Only conceive; Me thought my favorite little Pug, Fidelio, had fallen into the Serpentine; I saw him struggling, heard him barking, and awoke in an agony of tears!

Zor. Exquisite sensibility!

Lady Clary. Ha, Beauchamp!

Enter BEAUCHAMP *and* WALSINGHAM.

Beau. Let me present a friend to you, Lady Clara, whose absence from England you've heard me frequently lament—Mr. Walsingham.

Lady Clara. Your friends are always welcome here for *your* sake; but Mr. Walsingham will be welcome for his own.

Wal. Your Ladyship does me honor.—*(aside to Beauchamp.)* Is she a fool too?

Beau. None of the wisest I promise you.—Miss Mandeville, Mr. Walsingham. *(Zorayda curtesies.)*

Wal. Mandeville? I've known several of that name. Who—

Lady Clara. (laughing.) Yes; but not of Miss Mandeville's family, I take it. Were they, Zorayda?

Beau. (aside to Walsingham.) Hush! Mandeville's an assumed name.

Wal. Oh! the devil! Why didn't you tell me so before?

Beau. But, Lady Clara, I've another friend to introduce.

Lady Clara. I shall be very .... *(turning round; then with indifference)*—Oh, you wretch! my husband!

Zor. (aside to Beauchamp.) You couldn't have introduced a greater stranger.

Enter MODISH.

Mod. Mr. Walsingham, I rejoice to see you. Just returned, I suppose?—You rested well, I hope, Lady Clara? *(carelessly.)*

Lady Clara. perfectly; never passed a quieter night in my life.

[JOHN *delivers a Letter to* MODISH, *and goes off.*]

Mod. (Opens, and then throws it on the table.) Rivers.

Wal. I beg I mayn't prevent....

Mod. Oh! It's from a poor relation; 'twill keep.—Beauchamp, were you at Lady Sparkle's last night?

Beau. Yes: and found it very fashionable, and very dull.

Lady Clara. Oh! the terms are now synonimous.

Mod. Quite; for since everything that's fashionable is insipid, in mere justice every thing that's insipid must be fashionable!

Wal. Indeed! is this really so my Lord?

Lord List. Matter of fact, Sir, 'pon my soul! insipidity is now the very criterion of fashion. A man of *ton* should never dance but when he's not wanted, or sing but when nobody wishes to hear him. He should yawn at a comedy, laugh at a tragedy,

cry "damn'd bore" at both, tread upon his neighbor's toes, hunt with a tooth-pick in his mouth, see women tumble down stairs without trying to stop them, and, in order to be perfectly fashionable, should make himself completely disagreeable!

Zor. Bless me! how admirably your Lordship's practice exemplifies your theory?

Lord List. Oh! you flatter me.

Zor. No really; I do you but justice when I protest that I never saw any thing half so fashionable or insipid as your Lordship.

Wal. Nor I, upon my honor!

Lord List. 'Pon my soul you're too obliging! too obliging! 'pon my soul!

Lady Clara. Hark! A knock!

Zor. *(looking from the window.)* Now Heaven preserve my hearing! 'tis Miss Chatterall.

Lady Clara. I'm glad of it, she always talks scandal, and scandal is the best thing in the world for the nerves.

Lord List. And she talks incessantly, which saves one the trouble of an answer.

Zor. But she is so malicious!

Lady Clara. She cheats horribly at play!

Mod. She's disagreeable and affected.

Lord List. She's a bore.

Beau. She's deceitful.

Lady Clara. She's abominable. . . .

Enter MISS CHATTERALL.

Lady Clara. My dear creature, I'm so charmed to see you! We've not met this age!

Miss Chat. Oh, Lady Clara! such a dreadful thing has happened to me! I've been so shocked, and so quizzed, and all that!

Lady Clara. You alarm me!

Miss Chat. You must know, as I came along, another carriage got entangled with mine. A mob soon collected round us, and out of pure good nature and condescension, I thought I'd entertain them with a little graceful terror.

Lady Clara. How kind!

Miss Chat. Wasn't it?—So, on this, I screamed in the most delightful way imaginable, practised my new Parisot attitudes, and threw myself into my very best convulsions.

Mod. And, I warrant, the spectators burst into tears?

Miss Chat. No truly, they burst out a laughing!

All. Oh, shameful!

Miss Chat. Wasn't it!—I declare I was just like Orphy, the old fiddler, playing to the stocks and stones! the more I squalled the more they laughed; and at last they made me so angry that I vowed never to go into fits again, except in the very best company.

Wal. And a mighty proper resolution too!

Miss Chat. Wasn't it?—but, Modish, what provoked me most was your uncle; that great gawky creature, General Truncheon. He never offered to help me the least bit. And then he ha-ha-hae'd, and he-he-he'd, and all that so, you've no idea! —How shocking! wasn't it?

Mod. Oh! you know my uncle's a blockhead; he's supposed to have the greatest body and least wit of any man in London.

Zor. That follows of course: I've observed that in lofty houses the upper apartments are always the worst furnished.

Miss Chat. Very well, Miss Mandeville; extremely well indeed!—*(aside)* I'll remember that, and sport it for my own.—But, Lord! I must be gone, or Lady Cogwell will be out, and I wouldn't miss seeing her for the world.

Lady Clara. Lady Cogwell! I thought she was your aversion!

Miss Chat. Oh dear, so she is; but last night Mrs. Punt, playing with her at whist, found the ace of diamonds hid in her muff; so I'm going to comfort, and console, and vex, and teaze her; and all that you know. Modish, lead me to my carriage. You won't go with me, Miss Mandeville?

Zor. No; I'm not in a vexing, teazing, and all that humor this morning. But are you sure of the truth of this story?

Miss Chat. Sure of it? Why Mrs. Blab-all told it me, and I believe all she says to be gospel, for she has talked scandal to me every morning for this year and a half past, and in all that time never told the least bit of a lye. How kind of her! wasn't it?

Lady Clara. Are you going, Mrs. Walsingham? we dine at at home; if you can put up with a family dinner—*(he bows, and*

exit with Beaubam.)—You'll be with me in the evening, Miss Chatterall.

Miss Cat. Oh! without fail, and I hope by that time to have collected authentic information concerning two elopements, four young men ruined at play, nine ladies of quality taken tripping with their footmen, and one who died of a cold which she caught in going to church. How comical! Wasn't it? Come, Modish! [*Exit with Modish.*

Lord List. Pray Clara.... What was I going to.... Oh! where does Mrs. Ormand live?

Lady Clara. I protest I've forgotten, but the porter can tell you. May I ask, why you enquire?

Lord List. I've no sort of objection to your asking the question, provided you've have none to my not answering it. Good morning; we shall meet at dinner; or perhaps not till to-morrow; or perhaps not this month; it doesn't signify, you know, if we never meet at all.

Lady Clara. Oh! not in the least—Good morning.

[*Exit Lord Listless.*

Zor. I see Mr. Modish returning; shall I stay, or leave you to your usual discussions? perhaps my presence may prevent....

Lady Clara. Oh! child, don't mind me: these little matrimonial rubs are excellent for the vapours, and Modish is never so entertaining as when I've put him out of temper.

Zor. I'm sure then he's entertaining very often, but I cannot admire your mode of making him so; and for my own part I verily think that were I to live a thousand years, I could never succeed in extracting amusement from my husband's uneasiness, or find pleasure in being the torment of a man, whom I had sworn before the altar to love and to obey! [*Exit.*

Enter MODISH.

Lady Clara. (*humming an Italian air, opens Modish's letter thoughtlessly.*)—Lud! what am I doing! Beg your pardon, Modish, I've not read ten words upon my honor.

Mod. 'Twas of no consequence.

Lady Clara. Oh! it might have been from a lady, and I've no wish to pry into your secrets.

Mod. This letter comes from a relation, who after dissipating his fortune here went to India some eighteen years ago—Let me see what he says—" My dear cousin will be surprised to find that a man still exists, whom I doubt not he has long numbered with the dead: Still more will it surprise you to know, that soon after my arrival in India, my union with a rich widow at once cleared me of debt, and placed me in a state of opulence."

Lady Clara. Opulence? This grows interesting.

Mod. " On my wife's death I realized my fortune, determined to share it with you, my dear George."

Lady Clara. The worthy man! Who waits? Send Slip-slop to me.—I'll have a chamber prepared this instant.

Mod. " But fate was not yet weary of persecuting me; the vessel in which I had embarked my wealth was shipwrecked, and I regained the English shore, poor as I left it."

Lady Clara. Then the money's lost.

Enter SLIP-SLOP.

Slip. Did your La'ship....

Lady Clara. It doesn't signify, Slip-slop. [*Exit* Slip-slop.

Mod. " To you then, my dear George, I must apply for assistance, and soon after receiving this you may expect a visit from your affectionate cousin and friend, WILLIAM RIVERS.

Lady Clara. How unlucky! This money would have been so seasonable—

Mod. Seasonable, madam? Say, necessary, absolutely necessary; and what has made it so? Your dissipation, your extravagance, your—

Lady Clara Oh! mercy, dear Modish, mercy! Moderate your tone, I beg; consider my nerves.

Mod. My manner, madam, may be moderate, but the matter must be harsh.

Lady Clara. Oh! Sir, let but your voice be gentle, and as to the matter of what you say, I shan't mind it a straw.

Mod. What I say, Madam, you never do mind.

Lady Clara. True, Sir; I never do.

Mod. Madam, Madam, I must say, and I will say—

Lady Clara. Sir, Sir! Lord, couldn't you sing? 'Twould be much more agreeable.

Mod. Zounds, Madam, I'm serious, and well I may be so. My affairs are so embarrassed that I expect an execution in the house every day, and but one way remains of preventing it. You must give up your diamonds. I'll procure you paste instead; and as you are known to possess real jewels, nobody will suspect those you wear to be false.

Lady Clara. Well, Sir, I'll only mention one circumstance, and then if you still wish it, the diamonds are at your disposal.

Mod. (*aside*,—So really! I'm amazed!—Well, my dear Lady Clara, and this circumstance is—

Lady Clara. Simply this. About three months ago I sold the real jewels, and those now in my possession are the paste.*

Mod. (*violently*)—Confusion! Fire, and Furies!

Lady Clara. Don't swear, Sir!

Mod. Zounds! Madam, I must and will swear, and I must and will tell you once for all!—

Enter JOHN.

John. Mr. Rivers. [*Exit.*

Mod. He has nicked the time: I never felt less charitably disposed in my life.—(*Throws himself into a chair, his back turned to Lady Clara, who sits in an indolent posture, humming to herself.*

Enter RIVERS.

Riv. It is with diffidence, Sir, that I venture.—

Lady Clara. Oh! Heavens! A black scratch! Drops! drops, or I shall faint!—(*Modish rings.*)—

Riv. I fear, Madam, I have by some means occasioned an alarm, which—

Enter SLIP-SLOP (*with drops.*)

Lady Clara. Quick! quick! or I expire. (*after taking a smelling-bottle.*)—Slip-Slop, tell the man, I beg his pardon, but I've always had a particular aversion to black scratches.

* This was related to me as an anecdote.

Slip. (to Rivers)—Sir, my Lady hopes you'll accuse her, but a black scratch always was her particular diversion.

Riv. I'm sorry to have offended, but 'tis the lot of misfortune to offend in every thing!

Mod. I—I think, Mr. Rivers, I've heard my father speak of you, but as to what he said, I really don't remember a syllable.

Riv. I fear, if you did it could not prejudice you in my favor; yet as my conduct was only imprudent, never dishonorable, your father's friendship was mine to the last.

Mod. Very possible; I don't dispute it.

Riv. Were he alive, I should not want a friend! Let me, however, rejoice in his son's affluence. Your numerous retinue, your splendid mansion, prove that you've the ability to serve me, and your inclination I cannot doubt.

Mod. Why really—Hem!—Appearances are frequently deceitful and—and to say the truth—Pray, what may your plans be?

Riv. They rest on you—As all hopes of independence are finally destroyed, I must rely on your good offices to obtain for me some small place, and being so near a relation, I think, I have some claim to your exertions.

Mod. Claim—Oh! yes—certainly a claim—but really places are so difficult to obtain.—

Lady Clara. Difficult! I tried the other day without success to get my footman in the custom-house; so nothing can be done for you in that way.

Mod. However, Sir, I'll look about me, and if any thing occurs will let you know. Good morning.

Riv. In the mean time may I without offence mention to you my distressed situation? The griping hand of poverty presses hard upon me: I have no other support, have no one to look to but yourself.—Oh! George, George, you once loved me! Often have I carried you in my arms, often has my hand supplied you with money when a boy, and in all your little distresses it was from my partiality that you sought assistance! Let these recollections, let the recollection of your excellent father plead for me, when I mention—that—that a trifling pecuniary aid will be of most essential service.

Mod. (*with emotion, aside to* Lady CLARA) I'll—I'll give him a ten pound note, and send him away.

Lady Clara. Ten pounds? Heavens! Modish! don't be so extravagant.

Mod. Your Ladyship is always œconomical, when charity is in the case!

Lady Clara. (with a sneer.) Oh! Sir, you're partial to me!

Mod. If I am, dam'me!—*(resuming his cold manner.)* I'm very sorry, Mr. Rivers, it's out of my power to assist you at present, but if I hear of any thing to suit you, I'll let you know. Good morning.

Riv. But Sir—

Mod. I'll move heaven and earth to serve you. Good morning.

Riv. But Sir, if you don't know where I live, how can you inform me of your success.

Mod. Oh! true! where shall I send?

Riv. (hesitating)—I am ashamed to name such a miserable—I —I lodge at the Three Blue Posts, in Little Britain

Lady Clara. Oh! Shocking! Is it possible that any body can live at the Three Blue Posts?

Mrs Slip. Oh! dear no, my Lady; it an't possible.

Riv. Before I go, Sir, let me ask whether your sister Emily is still living.

Lady Clara. Oh! yes, But she can't assist you, so it's useless applying to her. However, my porter can give you her direction.

Riv. Is she then in distress! I'll hasten to her, and though she may not give me relief for my wants, with her I may at least find sympathy for my woes, a sentiment which I have vainly sought for in the Palaces of the Great.—*(With stifled anger.)* Good morning, Sir.

Mod. Your servant.

Riv. (aside.) So fades my hope! On how sandy a foundation do they build, who place their reliance on the friendship of affluence! [*Exit.*

Lady Clara. So, he's gone at last.

Mrs. Slip. And truly I'm glad of it! No wonder your La'ship was so flusterated at seeing him; for when I first saw his odorous black scratch, I protest it threw me into such a constellation, that I thought I should have conspired upon the spot!

Lady Clara. Poor Slip-slop! Order the carriage to the door.
[*Exit.* Slip-slop.

Mod. Before you go, Madam, I must say—

Lady Clara. My dear Mr. Modish, say not another word on the subject, since on one point I am decided; that whenever we are of different opinions, you must be wrong, and I must be right. Good morning. [*Exit.*

Mod. I've gained much by this conference! Bachelors! Bachelors! Tye yourself up in the noose of hemp, rather than the noose of matrimony. The pain of the former is never felt after a few minutes; but the knot of the latter grows tighter every hour during years, and is at last only loosened by death or infamy. [*Exit.*

ACT II.

ZORAYDA'S *Apartment—She is discovered folding a Letter.*

ZORAYDA.

'TIS done! Yes Beauchamp, we part, and for ever! Yes, tell you so myself—No, no! I cannot! That painful task, I trust, this letter will, induce Mrs. Ormand to undertake. What? Beauchamp's mistress? The mistress of a *married* man? Break, fond heart, break, but support such shame no longer! Hark!—he comes!—*(concealing the letter.)*—

Enter BEAUCHAMP.

Beau. Zorayda!—How, in tears my love!

Zor. (assuming gaiety)—Heed them not!—A mere trifle—My grief is already forgotten.

Beau. Indeed? Had your grief then so slight a cause.

Zor. Ah! while remorse and shame dwell here, can my cause for grief ever be slight!

Beau. Yet methinks in public your manner—

Zor. Is gay, is forced, is agonizing! Loth am I that the world should see that I suffer, since 'twas from you my sufferings sprung;

but believe me, Beauchamp, the smiles which play on my cheek in public are to my heart as moon-beams falling on some rock of ice; they shine, but warm not!

Beau. Dearest Zorayda '—

Zor. Edward! Edward! Oh! where is my father? perhaps now stretched on the bed of sickness, calling on Zorayda for those offices which a daughter alone can perform; and woe is me! calling in vain! Perhaps—perhaps ere this cold in a foreign grave, where his heart has forgot at my name to burn with anger, or to glow with love, where Death has long since forbidden his lips to call on me, or curse me! Yet if he still *should* live—too surely, wretched Zorayda, he lives no longer for thee.

Beau. Zorayda, would you drive me mad?

Zor. And still no letters from India? Still no word from my father, or kind, or cruel? Oh that I could but know he still exists! that I could but once more see the characters of his hand; that I could but for one moment hear his voice, though in the next I again heard it curse me!

Beau. Nay, be comforted! A person just arrived from India, I trust, can give me some tidings of Mr. Mortimer, and having discharged my errand here, I hasten to him. You mentioned some trinkets which you wished to purchase; these notes will answer their price. And now, my love, farewell for the present: when next we meet, I hope to bring good tidings.

Zor. Heaven grant it! but to whom go you?

Beau. To a poor relation of Modish's, who applied to him for relief.

Zor. And he departed?—

Beau. Unrelieved.

Zor. Alas! Yet perhaps he was undeserving?

Beau. That I know not; but trust me, Zorayda, I love not those, who weigh too nicely the transgressions of a *sufferer*: to punish human errors is the province of Heaven; to relieve human wants is the duty of man!

Zor. True, true, dear Edward! and therefore cannot you—

Beau. You know, my means are circumscribed; what cash I could have spared, was already appropriated to your use.

Zor. To mine?—these notes?—And whither is he now gone?

Beau. To Mrs. Ormond's, whose noble heart would willingly relieve him, but whose means—

Zor. And if she cannot—what must he do?

Beau. Starve, Zorayda!

Zor. He shall not!—no, no, he shall not! Follow him! These notes—take them, take them all: haste to him with them: oh! haste, ere it be too late! Nay, oppose me not, dear Edward; in this I must not be opposed.

Beau. Oppose you, Zorayda? be my own heart hardened, when I defeat the generosity of yours! I haste with your present to Mrs. Ormond, and at the same time I trust I shall obtain some tidings of Mr. Mortimer.

Zor. To Mrs. Ormond? Stay! I will inclose the notes in this letter—*(sealing it)*—Give it her; it says—

Beau. What, my love?

Zor.—*(after a pause)*—What *I* cannot!—Leave me! Nay delay not! Leave me, I conjure you!

Beau. I obey! [*Exit.*

Zor. I cannot doubt that letter's effect: Mrs. Ormond will read my sad story with compassion, and stretch forth her hand to save from destruction a poor creature, whose guilt began in ignorance, whose knowledge of that guilt, but for her, must end in despair! She will convince Beauchamp, that 'tis necessary we should part: then will I hasten back to India, hasten to my dear, my cruel father: will throw me on his bosom, will cling round his knees, will clasp his hand till it dashes me on the ground, and then, if his feet trample me, will bathe them with my tears, kiss them and die! [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—Mrs. ORMOND'S.—*The Breakfrst Table is set.*

Enter Mrs. ORMOND, *followed by* ANNE.

Mrs. Orm. Nay, Anne, it must be so; I must part with him.

Anne. Part with Frank? how will you manage that, Madam? Why, you'll never persuade him to go.

Mrs. Orm. But he must; I can no longer afford to keep him.

Anne. For that very reason, he'll stay, Madam. Oh! Frank will never go, I'm certain.

Mrs. Orm. Well, well, send him hither—[*Exit* Anne. Mrs. Ormond *looking at a letter which she holds*]—"will call this morning—Edward Beauchamp."—I hope, then, my remonstrances have at length prevailed, and he sees his conduct to Zorayda in its proper light. Yet even then, how to persuade her to part from him—

Enter Frank, *places the Tea-urn on the Table, and is going.*

Mrs. Orm. Stay, Frank; I must speak with you.

Frank. I wait your orders, madam.

Mrs. Orm. I give them for the last time.

Frank. Madam!

Mrs. Orm. It grieves me to say it, my good fellow, but we must part.

Frank. Part, Madam!—Part!

Mrs. Orm. Even so; but be assured, Frank, I shall always feel grateful for your fidelity, and should my fortune ever change, you shall not be forgotten.—What is due to you?—(*taking out her purse.*)

Frank. And you really turn me away?

Mrs. Orm. Turn you away? No, but I'm constrained to dismiss you.

Frank. Dismiss me?—Very well!—Do it!—But I won't go!

Mrs. Orm. Nay, but Frank—

Frank. And you can be cruel enough to turn me away? In Mrs. Ormand's family have I lived forty years, man and boy, and now all of a sudden you turn me a-drift! Ah! I see a fair face may hide a hard heart!

Mrs. Orm. But hear me, my good fellow! my circumstances demand retrenchment, and unable longer either to maintain or pay you—

Frank. I don't want to be paid! I don't want to be maintained! I ask but to see you every morning, and be assured you are in health; I ask but to see my young master grow up the image of his father; carry him in my arms while he's a child,

and when he's a man to die in his presence! I ask but this, and you refuse me! Yet you cannot surely be so cruel; you could never really mean to drive me away—*(kneeling)*—Dear good lady, comfort me, say you did this but to try me, say you never really meant to part with your poor and faithful Frank!

Mrs. Orm. (affected.) Rise, rise, my good fellow!—Yes, you shall remain with me! Rather will I endure any inconvenience, than pain a heart so feeling!

Frank. Inconvenience? God bless you, madam, I shall rather relieve you than occasion any. I am yet strong and hearty; I can labor, can work my fingers to the bones in your service, and rather than you or yours should want wherewithal to eat, Lord forgive me if I wouldn't consent to your eating *me!* [*Exit.*

Mrs. Orm. Noble heart!—I have heard servants called the plagues of life; but never did I pass more delightful moments than while listening to the effusions of this honest fellow's gratitude.

Re-enter FRANK, *followed by* MR. RIVERS.

Frank. This way, Sir!—A gentleman to wait on you, madam. [*Exit.*

Riv. When I left England, Madam, you were so young that probably no trace remains in my cousin Emily's remembrance—

Mrs. Orm. Is it possible? Surely, Sir, I now speak to Mr. Rivers.

Riv. Even so; but if you recollect my story as well as my features, I fear you are not prejudiced in my favor: my juvenile follies—

Mrs. Orm. (eagerly.) Sir, my father loved you; his friends can never be judged harshly by me. But pray inform me, I fear your exepedition to the East—

Riv. The East, my dear Lady, was sufficiently kind; but, on my return, a tempest swept in one moment away the gains of eighteen painful years.

Mrs. Orm. I feel for your disappointment;—but ere we proceed, may I not offer you some breakfast? I am rather an invalid, and *rose* late to-day.

Riv. Were it not an intrusion—

Mrs. Orm. Intrusion? Oh! my good Sir, to meet with one whom my father loved, and who loved my father, is to me a delight so exquisite, and which now, alas! I enjoy so rarely!—Nay, be seated; I must not be denied.

Riv. What a contrast! [*aside.*]—I fear you will think me impertinent, yet I must hazard one enquiry. How comes it that your situation differs from your brother's so strangely?

Mrs. Orm. Oh! at my first entrance into life, my establishment was not less splendid, but my husband's nature, generous and benevolent to excess, ultimately proved our ruin. He was compelled to part with his estate, and we retired to an humble retreat, where my beloved Ormand expired.

Riv. But still your jointure—

Mrs. Orm. Satisfied my husband's creditors, not till I felt it, could I believe, that so much pleasure could be purchased by a sacrifice so trifling.

Riv. (*aside.*)—An angel, by Jupiter!

Mrs. Orm. This avowel must excuse my not offering you that assistance, which I should afford you most willingly; but doubtless on applying to my brother—

Riv. I have applied.

Mrs. Orm. And the result was—

Riv. Coldness and scorn!

Mrs. Orm. Indeed? Oh George!—Well, well, we will not despond: In my poverty, I have still some friends, I trust, both able and willing to oblige me. To these will I recommend you, and till they succeed in serving you, take a lodging near mine; my table shall be always open to you; and as you may already have contracted some little debts, pray make use of this trifle to discharge them. If not sufficient, only say it, and the sum shall be increased.

Riv. Madam!—Cousin!—Emily!—Nay, now my heart must burst!

Mrs. Orm. Let not such a trifle!

Riv. Forgive me!—Dearest Emily, forgive me! Here—take it, take it, and Heaven make you as happy with it as you deserve to be—(*giving her a pocket-book.*)

Mrs. Orm. How?—Notes?—and to a large amount!—What can this mean?

Riv. It means, that I deserve to be hanged, drawn, and quartered, for giving one moment's uneasiness to such an heart. I am rich, Emily, rich—Yet I lye, for all that was mine is now yours.

Mrs. Orm. Amazement: Can this be real?

Riv. A few hours shall convince you of its truth, nor can you feel better pleased to be heiress of my riches, than I feel at finding an heiress who deserves them. But I must away and begin my preparations, for by six o'clock, you must be lodged in your own house, attended by your own servants, and ready to welcome me at your own table.

Mrs. Orm. But, dear, Sir, this great haste—

Riv. Oh! hang delay; what I do, I do at once, and so farewell for the present.—*(going.)*

Mrs. Orm. But at least take back these notes; their value—

Riv. Is trifling when compared with that of your present! *(kissing it.)* But never—no, while I have life never will I part with this note! I'll wear it next my heart as a talisman, for you gave it when you could full ill afford it, and gave it too from the noblest of motives, compassion for the distrest, and respect for the memory of a father! [*Exit.*

Mrs. Orm. This event so unexpected, so sudden—Now then I can look forward once more without anxiety.—Oh! from what a weight is my bosom relieved!—William—my dear, my darling William—Thy prospects are bright again!—While she clasps thee to her bosom, thy mother shall tremble no more for thy future fate; and want shall no longer compel her to restrain the openness of thy liberal hand, or blame the benevolence of thy little feeling heart. My faithful servants too—How! Lord Listless?

Enter Lord LISTLESS.

Lord List. Even he. But you seem surprised at my visit: when you know its purport, I think, my dear Mrs. Ormond, you'll not be sorry to see me.

Mrs. Orm. (coldly.) Lady Clara, I suppose—

Lord List. No, Clara's quite out of the question; the thought's entirely my own, I'll assure you; but don't let your joy overpower you.

Mrs. Orm. My joy!

Lord List. Yes; for you must know, my dear creature, I'm in love with you.

Mrs. Orm. You, my Lord? You?

Lord List. To distraction, 'pon my soul! *(carelessly.)*

Mrs. Orm. I can scarcely credit my hearing.

Lord List. And here I am for the express purpose of making you proposals.

Mrs. Orm. I protest I'm so surprised—

Lord List. I've ordered my lawyer to draw up a handsome settlement; and as these apartments are but *La, La,* you had better remove to my house immediately.—La Fleur, my carriage!—Will you come?

Mrs. Orm. The coxcomb! *(aside.)* My Lord, I must be candid with you. Considering our situations, I know the world will blame me for not accepting your proposals; but could I so easily forget Mr. Ormond's loss, I must frankly own that your Lordship is by no means the man whom I think likely to make me happy in a second marriage.

Lord List. Marriage! my dear creature, who said a word on the subject? Nothing could be farther from my thoughts, for I think marriage a great bore; Don't you?—Now, what I meant was that sort of amicable arrangement, which, when we grow tired of each other, (as I doubt not we soon shall) may leave both at liberty to pursue our separate inclinations. Thus stands the case; You are poor, I am rich; you are handsome, so am I. Despise then the opinions of prudes and synics, and sharing a splendid establishment with love and me—*(yawning.)*

Mrs. Orm. Beyond a doubt must be perfectly enchanting!—*(aside)* Insolent coxcomb! Yet he's so absurd that anger here would be ridiculous.

Lord List. Yes, I thought you'd like the proposal. Nay, I should have flown to you with it upon the wings of love a month ago, if something or other hadn't continually driven it out of my head; and if my valet hadn't put me in mind of it this morn-

ing, 'pon my soul I believe I shouldn't have remembered it at all.

Mrs. Orm. It were better, my Lord, that you never had, for I cannot hold your insolent offers in greater contempt than I do their proposer. After this declaration you must be convinced that your presence here cannot be acceptable. *(Going.)*

Lord List. Nonsense! Come, come, don't be silly, child!—My carriage is at the door, and I must positively take you away with me.

Mrs. Orm. Unhand me, my Lord!

Lord List. Ten thousand pardons! I forgot; you are a prude, and a little gentle force is necessary to quiet your scruples.

Mrs. Orm. My Lord!——I beg——I entreat you——

Lord List. Now, why the devil give me all this trouble? Nay, come you must, 'pon my soul!

Mrs. Orm. Nay then—Frank!—Frank, I say!—Help! help!

Enter BEAUCHAMP.

Beau. (seizing Lord Listless, and disengaging Mrs. Ormand, who sinks into a chair.) Rascal! how dare you—Hey, the devil! Lord Listless!—And what brings your Lordship here?

Lord List. Poh, Beauchamp! 'tis a mere joke. Mrs. Ormand was alarmed without reason, and thought proper—

Beau. Without reason? I doubt it not; I believe no one has much to fear from your Lordship.

Lord List. I don't understand that sneer, but the immediate enforcement of your bond shall convince you that you, Sir, at least have something to fear from me. This will be merely a proper mode of punishing your present conduct, which I cannot but consider as ungrateful in the extreme; and 'pon my soul I should be in a confounded passion, if being angry were not too great an exertion for a man of fashion. [*Exit.*

Beau. Mean coxcomb! Mrs. Ormand, I fear your agitation—

Mrs. Orm. Oh! a fit of tears has relieved me; but how can I sufficiently thank you for your interference.

Beau. By accepting without scruple this from Zorayda *(gives a packet.)*

Mrs. Orm. And its contents are—

Beau. Hearing that Mr. Rivers meant to apply to you for assistance, and fearing lest your ability to relieve him should not square with your inclination, she readily sacrificed some jewels, which she had long been anxious to possess, and appropriated the money to the alleviation of his distresses.

Mrs. Orm. Noble girl! And while such is *her* conduct, how, Colonel Beauchamp, how can you justify your own, either to her or to yourself?

Beau. Justify it, I cannot. Yet surely circumstances may in some measure extenuate its impropriety. The woman's character, who, for my sins, calls me her husband—

Mrs. Orm. That woman, be she what she may, is still your wife, Colonel Beauchamp, nor are her faults any apology for yours. I may pity you for being united to such a woman; but while she exists, I must blame your attachment to any other.

Beau. Well then, my fair moralist, shew that pity by counselling my future conduct. What should I do?

Mrs. Orm. Can you ask me? Restore Zorayda to virtue and to her father.

Beau. On one condition you shall be obeyed. A report, which seems well authenticated, has reached me, that many months are past since my wife expired at Turin. For that place I mean instantly to set out, anxious to ascertain the fact, which, if true, leaves me at liberty to repair my injuries to Zorayda; and if false—

Mrs. Orm. You will then be guided by me?

Beau. There is my hand; on my honor, I will.

Mrs. Orm. I accept then your conditions. When mean you to set out for Turin?

Beau. I am impatient to be gone; yet how to tell Zorayda that I must leave her—

Mrs. Orm. Be that my care.

Beau. Dear Mrs. Ormond, would you but undertake that painful task, would you explain to her the object of my journey to Turin, and, should it prove unsuccessful, strive to reconcile her to the cruel alternative—

Mrs. Orm. All this shall be done, though not exactly by me; situated as I am with Lady Clara, I cannot go myself to her house

uninvited; but I think Mr. Rivers may without impropriety, under the pretext of returning to her this now unnecessary present.

Beau. Unnecessary! Have his wants then been already relieved?

Mrs. Orm. They heeded no relief; Rivers is wealthy, and the object of his visit to Lady Clara's this morning was to make an experiment on her heart, not of her purse. Zorayda's gift, therefore, being now superfluous, I will persuade Rivers to return it to her himself; and while expressing his gratitude for her well-intended benevolence, he may take an opportunity of convincing her that your absence is necessary, that Lady Clara's is by no means a proper abode for her, and he shall press her, 'till the result of your enquiries shall have determined her future conduct, to accept an asylum in my house.

Beau. And will you, Mrs. Ormond, will you hazard your reputation, and subject yourself to the world's censure, by affording protection to an unfortunate, whose errors—

Mrs. Orm. Hush! hush! No more of this. You accept then my proposals?

Beau. With transport! But by heaven you are an angel!—Oh, Mrs. Ormond! did all your sex think like you—would chastity stretch forth her hand to assist the penitent, not raise it to plunge her deeper—many a poor victim of imprudence now struggling with the billows might easily regain the shore!—But when some unhappy girl has made the first false step, branded with shame, abandoned by her former friends, courted by vice, and shunned by virtue, no wonder that she flies from remorse to the arms of luxury, and purchases a momentary oblivion of her sorrows by a repetiton of the fault which caused them.

[*Exeunt severally.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*An apartment elegantly furnished.*

MRS. ORMAND *and* RIVERS *are seated near a Table, on which is Desert, &c.*

RIVERS.

WELL, well, your commission is a delicate one, and I doubt much my executing it to your satisfaction; but however I'll do my best. Beauchamp, you say, is the villian's name who—

Mrs. Orm. It is, but guilty as he is in the present instance, justice compels me to say, that by no other act has he ever merited the name of villain.

Riv. By my soul, this one is quite sufficient! The married seducer of an unsuspecting girl, the selfish betrayer of a father confidence! Oh! he's qualified to take the degree of villain in any college of vice throughout the universe!

Mrs. Orm. Thus severe upon Beauchamp, how can Miss Mandeville's errors hope from you that indulgence—

Riv. Surely the case is widely different; besides, her generosity has interested me sincerely in her behalf. This you say is the packet which I am to return to her?—Mandeville?—Mandeville?—I don't recollect any person of that name in India; but no matter; whoever her father may be, if he really loves his daughter, heartily shall I rejoice to relieve the poor man from suffering, what I once felt so keenly myself.

Mrs. Orm. Yourself?

Riv. Emily, it was my misfortune to have a daughter on whom my soul doated. Her mother died while my child was yet an infant, and my child was the image of that mother, was the delight of my eye, was the comfort of my heart, was the solitary blessing of my existence; and while that one blessing was mine, I thought I possessed every other! This daughter, this very idolized daughter, sacrificed to passion *her* honor and *my* love, abandoned me for a villain, and her father became childless!

Mrs. Orm. Is she then dead?

Riv. To me for ever! She fled from India, doubtless with the perfidious Dorimant; and what has since become of her, I know not. But be she where she may, the ungrateful is no more my daughter.

Mrs. Orm. Yet were she now stretched in penitence at your feet—

Riv. Stretched in her coffin I might forgive her, else never!

Mrs. Orm. Oh! Mr. Rivers—

Riv. Nay, speak of her no more. I have sworn never to pardon her; that oath will I keep religiously, and seek that happiness, my dear cousin, in *your* family, which the ungrateful fugitive has banished for ever from my own! [*Exit.*

Mrs. Orm. Either Mr. Rivers deceives himself, or the difference must be strange between a father's and a mother's feelings! Yes, my loved William, should'st *thou* prove unworthy my regard, I think my heart would break with grief; but till it *did* break, never, oh! surely never, would it feel one spark of less affection for thee! [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*A Room at Lady Clara's.—Another is seen through folding-doors.*

Enter Lord LISTLESS *and* MODISH.

Lord List. A peer and a man of fashion lend money? Mad! Positively mad, dear Modish, or such an idea could never have entered your head!

Mod. Is it so strange, then, to expect assistance [redacted]other?

Lord. List. No, but uncommonly strange to expect money from a man of fashion.

Mod. Absurd, when the largeness of your income—

Lord. List. Is absolutely necessary for the largeness of my expenditure. 'Pon my soul, my dear fellow, I could almost imagine, that you have quite forgotten how absolutely necessary it is for a man in my situation to keep up a certain style; to have horses he never rides, houses he never inhabits, and mistresses he scarcely knows by sight. In short, these unnecessary necessities

are so innumerable, that I'm myself much straitened in my circumstances, and mean to insist immediately upon the payment of Beauchamp's bond.

Mod. How, Lord Listless! That bond, which it is well known your father never intended to—But this is foreign to the subject. Will you oblige me with the sum I mentioned?

Lord List. I can't, 'pon my soul!

Mod. Say rather, you *won't*; I shall be better pleased.

Lord List. Shall you?—Then I won't 'pon my soul!

Mod. I've done. If you can justify to yourself this conduct towards so near a relation as Lady Clara, and a man whom you called your friend—

Lord List. Friends? Relations? Ridiculous! My dear Modish, you surely forget that I'm a citizen of the world, an universal philanthropist. The poor are *my* relations, the unfortunate are *my* friends: and as to my natural friends and relations, I don't care that for them all put together, 'pon my soul!—*(snapping his fingers.)* [*Exit.*

Mod. Contemptible!—Yet how dare I arraign his conduct, when I remember how little did compassion sway my own this morning to poor Rivers!

Enter JOHN.

John. Here's a sad job, Sir! The porter has let in the old usurer.

Mod. [redacted]? The usurer? what Squeez'em?

John. [redacted]ame, Sir.

Mod. The devil?—Yet I dare not refuse to see him.—show him up.—[*Exit John.*]—No doubt he comes for money, but I must beat him off as civilly as I can.

JOHN *introduces* SQUEEZ'EM.

Mod. Good God, is it you, my dear Mr. Squeez'em? I'm charmed beyond measure to see you! why you look charmingly, charmingly I protest!

Squeez. You're mighty good to say so, Sir. I made bold to call.—

Mod. I'm extreemly glad you did, for I was just wondering why I hadn't seen you for so long; and why don't you call oftener? I'm happy at all times to see my best friend, Mr. Squeez'em.

Squeez. I am much flattered by your kindness, Sir—There is a—

Mod. I beg you'll be seated. John, a chair for Mr. Squeez'em.

Squeez. It's quite unnecessary, for I only—

Mod. I must insist upon it. My good friend, sit yourself down, I entreat you. *(They sit.)* And now tell me, how are your children? All well, I hope! No measles? No hooping-cough? No—

Squeez. None, Sir, none, I thank you; but there is a little—

Mod. A little one coming is there? I beg I may stand godfather.

Squeez. Lord, Sir, you mistake; I'd only—

Mod. Why, isn't dear Mrs. Squeez'em likely to—

Squeez. Dear Mrs. Squeez'em has nothing at all to do with what I'm come about. To be plain with you, Mr. Modish, there is a little affair, which—

Mod. A little affair? Oh! you sly rogue! What, which must be a secret between you and me? Well, well, I promise you, Mrs. Squeez'em sha'nt hear a word of it. And so the little girl is pretty, is she?

Squeez. Lord, Sir, I can't get you to hear me out; and I've walked here all the way from St. Mary Axe on purpose to—

Mod. Walked here? What, all that way? I pray take some refreshment, for I am sure you must be fatigued. Here John, tea, coffee—or perhaps you'd prefer a glass of wine? only say what you like, and—

Squeez. Dear Sir, there's nothing I should like so much at present as to have you listen to what I want to say.

Mod. Surely, surely; you won't take any refreshment then?

Squeez. None, I thank you, Sir; I'm in a hurry to return home, and only wish to ask—

Mod. In a hurry to return home? Then for Heaven's sake don't let me detain you.—Here John, light Mr. Squeez'em down stairs.

Squeez. Sir, I only want to—

Mod. To get home, I know it. Good night.

Squeez. I should be glad to—

Mod. To go; pray suit your convenience, but I'm greatly obliged to you for this call, Chatting away an hour with a friend like you is so amusing!—Open the door, John.

Squeez. If you'd only be so good as to pay—

Mod. My respects to Mrs. Squeez'em; I shall take the first opportunity, and bring Lady Clara with me, till then, adieu, my dear Mr. Squeez'em; consider me as your fast friend, and be assured, that I shall always be delighted to serve you to the utmost extent of my ability.

[*Exeunt* Squeez'em *and* John.*

Mod. So! He's gone, and now I can breathe again; but I must rejoin my company, lest the cause of my absence should be suspected. With a mind thus ill at ease how tormenting it is to assume the appearance of content, and mingle with the irksome gaiety of the happy and unthinking. [*Exit.*

Enter Miss CHATTERALL *and* SLIP-SLOP.

Miss Chat. Let Lady Clara know that I'm here, and have something to say to her of importance. [*Exit* Slip-slop.

Enter WALSINGHAM.

Miss Chat. Oh! Lord, Mr. Walsingham!—

Wal. Oh! Lord, Miss Crhatterall!—

Miss Chat. I've got such a story to tell you!—

Wal. "[illegible]ory to tell?"—I dare say you have.

Miss Chat. Do you know Miss Bloomly?

Wal. Only by character.

Miss Chat. Then you know the worst of her, for her character's monstrous shocking, that's the truth on't. But would you believe it, she's crooked! How comical, an't it?

Wal. Crooked? Imposible!

Miss Chat. Oh! but I assure you it's true, for her most intimate friend told me so just now with her own mouth.

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* This scene was suggested by that of *Monsieur Dimanche* in *Moliére's* "*Festin de Pierre.*"

Wal. Her friend!—A pretty sort of a friend, by my honor! Before I'd have such friends—

Miss Chat. Nay but, Mr. Walsingham, there was no harm in telling it to *me*, for she knew very well it would go no further.

Wal. Did she? Then I pronounce her a most learned Lady, for she knows what no other person in London does, man, woman or child.

Miss Chat. Well, but now don't repeat this story I beg, for nobody else knows it; and I only mean to tell it to Lady Clara, and a few particular friends, under a profound promise of secrecy.

Wal. There you are quite right, for whenever you wish a malicious report to circulate, you should always relate it as an inviolable secret.—People of fashion hear so much scandal daily, that one's own particular lye is frequently huddled into the crowd, and perhaps totally forgotten; but tell a fine lady a scandalous anecdote under promise of secrecy, and I'll be bound she pops it out in five minutes after.

Miss Chat. I declare now, he doesn't believe a word of it, and that's monstrous provoking! However, I hope it will still serve to break off Miss Bloomly's marriage with young Flash. Well I protest I can't conceive how it is that every body contrives to get married except myself! I'm sure I do all in my power; grudge no expence in fans, feathers, cold cream, pearl powder, and bloom of oriental lilies; and it was but last week that I paid the Lord knows-what for a new pair of the very best arched eye-brows!—Yet all won't do, and I'm sure it's—it's *curst* provoking, so it is!

Enter ZORAYDA.

Miss Chat. Oh! Miss Mandeville, do you know—

Zor. Alas! Yes, Miss Chatterall, I know it but too well!

Miss Chat. Do you! Oh! Gemini! who could have told you?

Zor. The town talks of nothing else: at first indeed I wouldn't believe the story; but the redness of your eyes proves it to be but too well founded.

Miss Chat. My eyes?—Dear, what can you mean?

Zor. I'm sure I pity you sincerely, but how *could* you be so imprudent? How could you think of going in your own carriage to the place where your little boys are nursed?

Miss Chat. My little boys?

Zor. Nay, it's too late to pretend ignorance; I know the story but too well!

Miss Chat. Do you? Then pray let me know it too; for let me die if this isn't the first word I ever heard of it.

Zor. Nay, this is carrying the jest too far, since every body knows you were married in St. Martin's Church to a Serjeant of the Guards, of the name of Brazen, on the seventeenth of last June, at seven and thirty minutes past eleven, odd seconds; and that you have at this moment two fine little boys at nurse with Mrs. Mum, No. 9, Paradise Row, three doors from the Red Lamps and Green Railing. Why, dear me, every body knows it as well as I do!

Miss Chat. Oh! Mercy! what, *I* marry a Serjeant in the Guards! *I* have fine little boys! *I* visit a vulgar Mrs. Mum! Oh! horrid! Oh! monstrous!

Zor. Really, Mrs. Brazen—

Miss Chat. Don't call me Mrs. Brazen! I won't be called Mrs. Brazen!

Zor. Nay, 'tis a disagreeable situation, I own, and I declare I pity you extremely.

Miss Chat. Don't pity me, Miss! I won't bear to be pitied! There's not a syllable of truth in the story, and I'm surprised you could believe such a thing.

Zor. Oh! But I had it from your friend Mrs. Blab-all, and she, you know,—"has talked scandal to you for this year and a half past, and never told you the least bit of a lye in all that time!"—

Miss Chat. Mrs. Blab-all? A malicious creature! But I always thought her a very bad woman! I'll go this moment and tell her—But, even if this story *were* true, I don't understand, Miss, why you should talk to me about it of all people in the world!

Zor. Dear! I thought talking over the subject would console you! Did not you go this morning to Lady Cogwell, on purpose to talk over the story of her cheating?

Miss Chat. Yes, but I did *that* merely to teaze her.

Zor. Did you? Then I vow and protest, that's the very reason why *I* did *this.*

Miss Chat. Indeed? Then let me tell you, Miss—

Zor. Come, Miss Chatterall, even make yourself easy. After all, this story of the footman is simply an experiment of mine, intended to ascertain how you would bear being the heroine of such an anecdote, as I have frequently heard you relate of others; and I trust it will convince you, that murdering characters is not an amusement quite so harmless as you and your acquaintance seem to think it.

Miss Chat. Very well, Miss! Very well! But since you think proper to take such liberties with—

Zor. Nay, nay, either be calm, or excuse my leaving you, since if the storm must rage, I prefer infinitely hearing it at a distance.

BALLAD.—*(Cease, rude Boreas.)*

STILL this tempest wildly raging
List, fair lady, list to me;
Let my prayers your wrath assuaging,
Calm your bosom's stormy sea;
Anger now would sure be silly,
Nothing should your peace destroy;
While you think on little Billy,
Serjeant Brazen's own sweet boy!

[*Exit.*

Miss Chat. A saucy chit! I protest she has so flurried me, that I dare say just now I look as hideous as herself! And here's somebody coming too!—I'll step into the next room, and settle myself before the glass. [*Retires.*

Enter JOHN *followed by* RIVERS.

Riv. Say to Miss Mandeville that a gentleman has a message to her from Mrs. Ormand.—*Exit John.*]—I feel not a little embarrassed at entering upon a business so delicate. How the Deuce shall I open the conversation?—Nay, there's no time for reflection, for here comes the lady.

Miss Chat. (advancing, and looking at him through her glass.) —Um! A stranger!—And really a personable man.—I'll accost him.—If you wish, Sir, to see Lady Clara—

Riv. No, Madam; my business, is with you. My name is Rivers, and I come here authorized by Colonel Beauchamp to converse with you on a very delicate subject.—*(aside.)*—Well, hang me if I see an atom of the youth and beauty which Mrs. Ormand praised so highly!

Miss Chat. By Beauchamp did you say, Sir? By Colonel Beauchamp?

Riv. You seem surprised, Madam; but suffer me to say, that Beauchamp's attachment to you—

Miss Chat. Attachment to me? I'm sure, if he ever had any, he kept it a profound secret.

Riv. Ah! Madam, you flatter yourself! In spite of his precautions, that secret is now so well known, that things can no longer remain as they are, and some change in your situation ought to take place as soon as possible. I trust, Madam, you are of my opinion.

Miss Chat. Why really, Sir—to say the truth—I can't deny that I *am* rather of your way of thinking. But as Colonel Beauchamp has a wife—

Riv. That wife, he has great reason to believe exists no longer.

Miss Chat. (looking pleased.)—Indeed?—dear Sir, but that quite alters the case, you know!

Riv. It does, and should this event be ascertained, his hand will immediately be offered, where his heart has long been given. —*(aside)*—Well, there certainly is no accounting for tastes.

Miss Chat. Lord, Sir! dear, Sir!—*(aside)*—Thank Heaven then I *shall* be married after all!

Riv. But should Mrs. Beauchamp still be living—

Miss Chat. (sighing)—Then, Sir, there's an end of the whole business!

Riv. True, Madam, and I rejoice that you feel the necessity: It relieves me from the most embarrassing part of my commission, and emboldens me to say, without further ceremony, that in case of your not marrying Beauchamp, all your friends think it right that you should set off immediately for India.

Miss Chat. For India!—Lord, Sir, What should I do there? Why must I needs be packed off to India, because I can't marry Colonel Beauchamp?

Riv. My dear Madam, 'tis absolutely necessary, and till you set sail, Mrs. Ormond requests you to accept an assylum in her house. At first indeed she had some scruples at engaging in an affair so delicate; but as she is confident that Colonel Beauchamp is the only person who has ever been particular to you—

Miss Chat. *(tossing her head.)*—Indeed, Sir? Upon my word then she's very much mistaken. A great many people have been much more particular than Colonel Beauchamp, I can assure her.

Riv. How! a great many?

Miss Chat. Yes, Sir, fifty at least.

Riv. Zounds! Madam, fifty?

Miss Chat. Bless me, Sir, what is there so strange in that? Why if I don't marry for a year, I dare say there'll be fifty more.

Riv. The devil there will!—Then, Madam, your going to India—

Miss Chat. I'd as soon go to the moon, Sir!—What, leave London, dear London, and the gay world, the dear gay world! The very thought on't is more odious and execrable, and all that Sir, an't it?

Riv. But, madam, madam, should your marriage not take place, can you think it proper that Beauchamp's attachment to you should last?

Miss Chat. No, to be sure I don't. In that case he'll go *his* way, I mine, till either he has got rid of his matrimonial clog, or I found some other lover as much to my liking. That's all, Sir.

Riv. Fire and furies! what depravity! *(aside:)* Your grief then for his loss wouldn't prevent—

Miss Chat. Lord, no, Sir! why should it? The man is certainly well enough for a man; but if he breaks with me, I don't despair of finding as good to supply his place.

Riv. By heaven this is too much!—Hear me, lost unhappy creature!

Miss Chat. Oh! Lord bless me, what's the matter?

Riv. Are you then indeed so dead to shame—But I abandon you to the sorrows which cannot fail to arise from principles so depraved!

Miss Chat. How? What?—Sir, how do you dare—

Riv. Yet I thank you for not preserving the mask before me. I can now open Mrs. Ormand's eyes, and shall insist upon her taking no further notice of a woman, who has not only broken down the pale of virtue, but who glories in the breach! Oh! fye upon you?

Miss Chat. I?—I?—Oh! monstrous!—*(ringing the bell violently.)* Who waits there?—Lady Clara?—Mr. Modish! where are you, Mr, Modish? Oh I shall burst with rage!—*(throwing herself into a chair.)*

Enter LADY CLARA.

Lady Clara. For heaven's sake, why is all this noise?

Miss Chat. (sobbing.) Oh! Lady Clara, I've been so shocked and insulted by that odious man! He has said such things! How quizzical, an't it?

Lady Clara. Mr. Rivers here again!

Riv. Even *He*; but I shall intrude upon your Ladyship no longer than while I return this packet to Miss Mandeville, and with it my thanks: It grieves me that I cannot praise her other qualities as highly as her generosity.

Miss Chat. Miss Mandeville? Nay then I'll see— [*opening the packet.*]

Lady Clara. I'm amazed at you, Mr. Rivers! what you can mean by this conduct—

Riv. A time may come, when your Ladyship may not be perfectly satisfied with your own; but however great may then be your contrition, remember, that I now bid you an eternal farewell!—*(going, he meets Beauchamp, and starts back.)*—Dorimant, by Heaven!

Beau. Ha! Mortimer here!

Riv. (seizing him.) Where is my child? What place conceals her? Answer, or I spurn you at my foot!

Lady Clara. Bless me, Beauchamp, what means—

Riv. Beauchamp!—Ha! then my poor girl is already abandoned, for you coquette! But this is no place for—You shall hear from me soon, Sir;—and till he does hear from me, sit thou heavy on his soul, curse of a distracted father! [*Exit.*

Lady Clara. Why, what can the fellow—

Beau. Oh! Lady Clara, I shall go mad! 'Tis Mortimer, 'tis the rich East Indian, who—

Lady Clara. Lord, no! That is Rivers, our poor relation, who—

Beau. Oh! no, no, no! I know him but too well! But why do I linger here? I'll follow him, and either perish by his hand, or obtain from him Zorayda's pardon! [*Exit.*

Lady Clara. Mortimer? I protest, I'm frightened out of my senses!

Miss Chat. (reading.)—"Unfortunate attachment"—"ignorance of the world"—Beauchamp"—"my father"—"fled from India.—So! the whole story of Miss Mandeville's seduction, and consequent embarrassments, in her own hand! I think I shall now be even with her, for I'll to the printer's with this letter immediately.

Enter MODISH.

Mod. Whither now, Miss Chatterall?

Miss Chat. Oh! I can't stop a moment. Look, Sir, look; a letter of Miss Mandeville's, and to morrow's newspaper shall serve it up at every fashionable breakfast-table in town, where, "Philanthropus" shall cry out shame upon her! "an indignant observer" pull her to pieces without mercy, and, while one paper torments her with "gentle hints," another shall pester her to death with "friendly remonstrances."—Your servant, Sir. [*Exit.*

Mod. A letter of Zorayda's! What can the spiteful creature mean?—Ha! Lady Clara, you seem agitated?

Lady Clara. Something has happened which—But I'll know the truth of it this moment.

Enter SLIP-SLOP.

Lady Clara. Slip-slop, let one of Mrs. Ormond's servants be sent for instantly.

Slip. Frank is below, my Lady; but, begging your pardon, I think he's a little intoxticated with liquor.

Lady Clara. No matter, send him hither. [*Exit* SLIP-SLOP.

Mod. But what can possibly—

Lady Clara. You shall know all presently.—Oh! here he comes.

Frank (entering half drunk, with Slip-Slop.*)* Huzza! the East Indian for ever! huzza!

Mrs. Slip. Hush, hush, Frank! None of these exhalations! Don't you see—

Lady Clara. Come nearer, Frank. Pray does your Lady know Mr. Rivers.

Frank. Know him! Aye, that she does, Heaven bless him! By your asking, I suppose by this time your Ladyship knows him too; why, he did take you in finely, that's the truth on't.

Lady Clara. The fellow's drunk.

Frank. No, ma'am, Mrs. Slip-slop's not drunk; that's not it. But upon my soul, ma'am, I can't tell you the story properly if you keep turning round and round in that comical manner.

Mod. Took her in, say you?

Frank. Yes, and your honor too, saving your presence. Why he's the great rich monstracious nabob, Mortimer! He's the East Indian! Huzza! the East Indian for—

Slip. (putting her hand before his mouth.) Hush! hush, fellow!

Mod. How, Mortimer!

Lady Clara. And—and is he so very rich?

Frank. Oh! not so very rich. His servant, indeed, Mr. Yambo-Zing, assured me he had brought over whole bushels of godas, and pecks of blue peas! But, for all his boasting, I don't believe he's worth above two or three millions at most.

Lady Clara. Millions? Oh mercy!

Mod. Confusion!

Frank. But honest Frank, says he, all I have is your Lady's. Oh! that made me mortal happy!—And then, says he, honest Frank, Lady Clara shan't have a farthing on't. Oh! that made me a mortal deal happier!—Huzza! huzza! The East Indian for ever! Huzza! [*Exit.*

Mod. See, Madam, see what your insensibility has thrown away.

Lady Clara. My insensibility, Sir! Oh monstrous! I whose nerves are so delicate, whose sentiments are so refined, that——

Mod. Madam, madam, the fault is your's. I pitied Rivers's distress, and should have relieved it had not you—

Lady Clara. Lord, Sir, what would you have had me do? I'm sure I made the best guess I could, and would have given the man any thing in the world had I only known that he wanted nothing.

Mod. Madam, madam, you have committed the fault—you must repair it. Go this moment to my sister's, entreat her to intercede for us with Mr. Rivers, and either bring home *his* pardon or never hope for mine. [*Exit.*

Lady Clara. Yes, I must go. Slip-slop, my cloak!—Such a princely fortune lost!—I remember now to have heard of Mortimer's immense wealth; and perhaps at the very moment he pleaded for half a crown, his pockets were stuffed with pearls and diamonds; and I warrant his odious black scratch periwig had been papiloted with bank-notes!—Oh! I could go distracted.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*Mrs.* ORMOND'S.

Enter Mrs. ORMOND *and* RIVERS.

Mrs. ORMOND.

Miss Mandeville's manners coarse, and her person disagreeable?

Riv. Upon my word I thought so; but I've been so long absent from the fashionable circles, that possibly she may be the general taste; I'm only certain that she's not at all to mine.

Mrs. Orm. And when you spoke of her return to India—

Riv. Oh! she could not endure the very mention of it. I was really afraid she'd have gone into hysterics.

Mrs. Orm. Strange! But, however, I'll ascertain the fact to-morrow, and this mystery shall be explained.

Riv. 'Till then let the matter rest.—And now my dear Emily —*(a knocking without.)* Hey! what can be the meaning of that thundering rap?

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Lady Clara Modish.

Riv. Lady Clara Devil! and I'd rather meet the latter.—Which way is she coming up?

Serv. This way. [*Exit.*

Riv. Then I'll go down the other.

Mrs. Orm. Oh! pray stay.

Riv. No, no; I'm not yet cool enough to conceal from the woman how heartily I despise her.

Mrs. Orm. Yet perhaps her neglect of you—

Riv. I guess what you would say, my good Emily. A moment of ill humor, a dish of tea too strong, a bad run of luck last night, the indisposition of her lap-dog, or any other fine Lady-like affliction, might occasion her indifference to *my* distress—but that she could see the infant graces of your child without interest, that she could suffer without compassion an heart like yours to languish in poverty, betrays an insensibility which I never can forgive. [*Exit.*

Mrs. Orm. You must though, my dear Sir, or your heart is composed of tougher materials than I imagine. Yes, yes, Rivers and my brother must be friends, and probably that brings Lady Clara hither.—So, here she comes!

Servant *shews in* Lady Clara *and* exit.

Lady Clara. My dear Mrs. Ormond, I've just hurried hither for one instant!—Why, they tell me you've been indisposed.—You look charmingly, however: But, you cruel creature, why did not you let me know you were ill?

Mrs Orm. Knowing your exquisite sensibility, Lady Clara, surely it had been barbarous in me to torture your nerves by a recital of my sufferings.

Lady Clara. Oh! fye, fye! when the delicate attentions of friendship can alleviate—I protest, Mrs. Ormond, you've got a mighty pretty house here.

Mrs. Orm. Tolerable. Mr. Rivers insisted upon my removing hither immediately, and therefore things are not quite—

Lady Clara. Mr. Rivers! dear, that puts me in mind—I want to talk to you about him. Do you know, he put the drollest trick upon me this morning!

Mrs. Orm. (archly.) So he did upon me; but you were too cunning for him: I, poor innocent, was completely the dupe of his feigned distresses; but upon you, he tells me, they made not the slightest impression.

Lady Clara. Ha, ha, ha! no more they did—Ha, ha, ha!—*(aside.)* Spiteful thing, how I hate her!—But, my dear Mrs. Ormond, you—you relieved him then—

Mrs. Orm. Oh! the relief, in *my* power to afford him was very moderate; and in truth our exchange of presents bore no proportion to one another. I had nothing to bestow on him but a very trifle and a dish of tea, and he repaid me with notes of not less than a thousand pounds.

Lady Clara. Mercy on me! A thousand pounds for a dish of tea? How unlucky it was that I had just sent away the chocolate!*

Mrs. Orm. Then he has such plans for equipages, diamonds, and estates—It would quite fatigue you, Lady Clara, only to hear the list.

Lady Clara. Oh! I shall faint presently! *(aside.)* But I hope the dear beggar thinks this trick of his as entertaining as you and I do?

Mrs. Orm. I am afraid he takes the affair a little more seriously.

Lady Clara. But surely, my dear creature, you can explain to him—

Mrs. Orm. Believe me, Lady Clara, however great may be my cause of complaint, my brother's interest will never cease to be mine; and if my interference can possibly produce a reconciliation....

Lady Clara. You will use it? Let me die now if that isn't being extremely kind: but indeed I always said you had one of

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* This *trait* is borrowed from *Mercier's* "Habitant de la Gaudaloupe,"

the best hearts in the world. And suppose now, to lose no time, you were to bring Mr. Rivers to my house to night?

Mrs. Orm. To-night? Why really—my mourning—

Lady Clara. Oh! as to your mourning, you know you'll be considered as at home; for, is not my house, is not every thing I possess, as much yours as my own?

Mrs. Orm. You're too kind, Lady Clara; indeed you're too kind!

Lady Clara. Not at all! Oh dear, not at all! I shall expect you then, and pray bring Mr. Rivers.

Mrs. Orm. I'll do my best; but in truth I doubt my being able to prevail on him, unless you can make use of Falstaff's excuse, and protest solemnly that you knew him all the while; however, if he should not come, depend upon it's not being a fault of mine.

Lady Clara. Well now, that's a dear creature; and I hope to Heaven you may succeed! Yet should your endeavors to appease Mr. Rivers prove fruitless, I shall console myself with the reflection that at least my dear sister enjoys those advantages of which, by imprudence, I have deprived myself.—*(aside.)* Oh! I could tear her eyes out! [*Exit.*

Mrs. Orm. Ha, ha, ha! I suspect Lady Clara leaves me not too well pleased with her visit.—So, here comes Mr. Rivers.

Enter RIVERS.

Riv. So, Emily, your visitor is gone; and now let me know what brought her hither.

Mrs. Orm. Can you seriously ask that question.

Riv. Why I believe I *could* guess—your brother no doubt—

Mrs. Orm. Even so. Lady Clara's errand was to express her contrition for this morning's adventure with all possible humility, and request your presence at her house to-night for the express purpose of receiving her husband's apologies and her own.

Riv. Aye? Well! well! I'm glad to hear it—I'll go.

Mrs. Orm. Will you?

Riv. Aye, and so shall you—I intend to take the liberty of tormenting her Ladyship—and she'll not be the worse for a little wholesome mortification—

Mrs. Orm. Nay, that is a fact which I cannot take upon me to deny.

Riv. And now for the scene of action; where you shall see crowds of coxcombs, and legions of coquettes at my coming, all "*dissolve*,

And like the baseless fabric of a vision
Leave not one fop behind."

Mrs. Orm. You've a secret then for killing insects, I presume?

Riv. No, only for dispersing them, and my talisman consists in pronouncing that single cabilistical word "distress;" away they go; for in fact, my dear Emily, a fashionable friend is an absolute bird of passage.—

Which here, while Summer reigns, enjoys the day,
Wings the warm gale, and courts the kindly ray;
But soon as winter lours, and storms arise,
To brighter scenes the airy wanderer flies,
Where breathe less boisterous winds, where
smile less clouded skies. } [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—Lord Listless.

Enter Lord Listless *and* Frifoneau.

Lord List. The writ was executed, you say?

Frip. Oui, my lor; et Le Colonel Beauchamp, be tres bien lock up chez cet honnête, Monsieur Touchit.!

Lord List. Good! but unluckily Beauchamp has friends, who wont leave him there long.—Now could I find some lasting means of revenging myself on the puppy.—What say you, Monsieur?

Frip. Mais voyons, my lor, voyons! Suppose—suppose you carry off Mademoiselle Mandeville?

Lord List. I carry her off?—Why should I take the trouble?

Frip. Mon dieu! you not see?—Beauchamp love Mademoiselle à la folle; but ven all of von sudden she disappear, he vil swear, vil cry, vil go distract! and ven Mademoisselle Mandeville been two tree days wid your Lordship, serviteur à la reputation de Mademoisselle Mandeville.

Lord List. Um! the idea would be tolerable if it were not that afterwards Beauchamp might take it into his head to cut my throat.—Now that I shoudn't like, because you know it would dirty my neckcloth.

Frip. Ma foi, mi lor, en verite! dat it vould! mais l'Italie, mi lor? vy you not enlever la petite—

Lord List. Right, right!—But then how to get hold of her, monsieur?

Frip. Oh c'est bien facile! go vid a chair to Lady Clara's, and as mademoiselle go in, or as she come out, I vip her into de sedan, de chair-men vip her up, your lorship vip her away; et volia' qu'elle est prise, pardi!

Lord List. Um, could this be done quietly, and in a proper way—for a bustle always bores me, 'pon my soul!

Enter WALSINGHAM.

Wal. How, in close consultation, my Lord? Perhaps I intrude.

Lord List. Oh! By no means; I've a little business indeed, which—

Wal. A secret?

Lord List. Um! you might serve me in't, if it were not——

Wal. My dear Lord, too happy if—

Lord List. And you'll be silent?

Wal. As a conceal'd author, whose comedy has just been damn'd. I give you my word, and now——

Lord List. You must know, then, I'm on the point of eloping with a certain young lady.

Wal. You? Good heavens! how can you take so much trouble! and have you a chaise-and-four ready?

Lord List. No, but I shall order my sedan chair to be prepared immediately.

Wal. A sedan? 'Faith that's new!—Well, you'll order your chair to Gretna Green, I hope?

Lord List. Oh! you mistake the business: the Lady in question is in love with a fellow, who bores me intolerably; and I carry off his mistress, merely for the sake of plaguing him.

Wal. Merely for the sake of plaguing him!

Lord List. Nothing else, 'pon my soul! The indea's good, an't it?

Wal. Good? it's excellent!

Lord List. Now the only difficulty is, how to entice her to the spot where my servants will be waiting for her; and if any friend——

Wal. Entice her!—then she's not appris'd of the honor intended her by your Lordship?

Lord List. Has'nt the most distant idea of it; and, in fact, hates me like the devil.

Wal. Zounds! my Lord, but that makes the joke a great deal better!—And could you possibly doubt my assisting so honorable a design?—

Lord List. Why to tell the truth, (but remember your promise of secrecy) the Lady is no other than Miss Mandeville; and as you are Beauchamp's friend——

Wal. Pshaw! what does that signify?—Isn't he a commoner, an't you a peer? Isn't he poor, an't you rich? Isn't he an old friend, an't you a new acquaintance? And can you doubt which of the two I should prefer serving?—My dear Lord, pray judge a little more of me by yourself!

Lord List. (aside.) A sensible fellow, 'pon my soul!—You'll undertake then to——

Wal. And think myself too happy in being of use to you, only let your chair and servants be ready—

Lord List. Oh! Monsieur shall take care of that.—Friponeau, attend this gentleman, conduct Miss Mandeville hither, and when she arrives wake me. [*Exit* FRIPONEAU.] Good evening, Walsingham. 'Pon my soul extremely obliged to you; am indeed—a—a—a—'pon my soul! [*Exit.*

Wal. Go thy ways, thou prince of puppies! But 'tis well this fellow made me his confidant, for the consequences of his scheme might have been very unpleasant to Zorayda; but now to mar it, and, if possible, get him into a scrape, of which at present he little dreams. The scoundrel!—but alas! there are too many in the world, who, like him, would soon make themselves villains, if nature hadn't kindly prevented it by making them fools.

[*Exit.*

SCENE III.—*An anti-chamber at* Lady Clara's. [*Music within.*]

Company cross the stage. Servants pass with refreshments.

Enter Miss CHATTERALL *and* Mrs. BLAB-ALL.

Mrs. Blab. Nay, my soul, if this letter be authentic, Lady Clara must give up Miss Mandeville, or my acquaintance, I'll assure you!

Miss Chat. Oh dear! My dear, as to that, *I* shall visit Lady Clara no more at any rate, unless indeed she gives a masquerade; and then you know nobody need know whether one visits her or not.—But accept a favor from her barefaced! Lord, my love, I blush at the very thought! Oh 'tis a sad family!

Mrs. Blab. Shocking, my dear!

Miss Chat. True, my life; only conceive! Beauchamp in goal, Mrs. Ormond intriguing with him, Miss Mandeville eloped, and Lady Clara giving entertainments when her husband's going to be arrested, and her brother's at the point of death.

Mrs. Blab. Oh! fye, fye, fye! I protest I'm quite shocked.

Miss Chat. Shocked, my dear? so am I, an't I?

Mrs. Blab. But Lord Listless dying? I never heard of that before.

Miss Chat. No? Dear, I thought every body had heard that Lord Listless having discovered an intrigue between Beauchamp and Mrs. Ormond with whom he was himself on certain terms—You understand me, my dear?

Mrs. Blab. Oh Lord! yes my dear to be sure I do; well, my love, and so——

Miss Chat. Well, and so, my life, my Lord was so severe in his observations, that at length Beauchamp got into a terrible rage, rapped out three great oaths that he'd be the death of him, seized a blunderbuss (which happened to be upon the breakfast-table) shot his Lordship through the body, and the Colonel and his enamorata immediately made off for France, with the intention of offering their services to the triumvirate. How odd! an't it?

Mrs. Blab. Odd indeed!—But Lord! my life, how unlucky it was that Mrs. Ormond should happen to have a blunderbuss lying on her breakfast-table?

Miss Chat. Extremely unlucky indeed, my dear. But come let us in, and if Miss Mandeville shews her face to night, I shall

tell Lady Clara what I think of her very plainly! for after all, my dear, to own a truth, the greatest advantage I ever could find in walking strait myself in the path of virtue, was the the privilege of insulting those who step a little on one side. Come, my dear! [*Exit.*

(*As they go off, enter* WALSINGHAM *and* FRIPONEAU.)

Wal. Do you see her? There she goes!

Frip. Vid de scarlet plume?

Wal. The same: wait at the great entrance till I entice her to the door, then convey her to your master with all speed.

[*Exit Friponeau.*

Wal. Hist, hist, Miss Chatterall!

MISS CHATTERALL *returning.*

Miss Chat. Mr. Walsingham, didn't you—

Wal. Hush! speak softly! my dear young lady, I've just discovered the most abominable design, the most attrocious plot!

Miss. Chat. Eh! what? against me?

Wal. Against you!

Miss Chat. Oh? goodness defend me!

Wal. And am come to caution you not to venture near the great entrance without sufficient protection.

Miss Chat. Dear me! and why?

Wal. The infamous agents of a certain nobleman are waiting there for the express purpose of carrying you off.

Miss Chat. Lord bless me!

Wal. And though I well know your virtue to be proof against either force or artifice—

Miss Chat. Undoubtedly!

Wal. Yet, as this affair would make such a disturbance—

Miss Chat. Terrible!

Wal. Would get into all the newspapers—

Miss Chat. Odious!

Wal. And render you the subject of animadversion—

Miss Chat. Execrable!

Wal. The consequences would be, that either your friends would fight a duel on your account——

Miss Chat. Tremendous!

Wal. Or you quiet the business by a marriage with his Lordship.

Miss Chat. Charming—monstrous I mean!

Wal. The best thing you can do, therefore, is to send for a guard—

Miss Chat. I'll do it instantly—

Wal. Return home under its protection—

Miss Chat. With the utmost diligence—

Wal. And above all, take care not to approach the great entrance.

Miss Chat. I approach it!—Oh Mr. Walsingham! I'd rather die than advance a single step towards it: good evening, and a thousand thanks! [*Exeunt severally.*

(A pause, after which Miss Chatterall puts in her head, looks round cautiously, then hurries across the stage, and Exit.)

Re-enter WALSINGHAM *laughing.*

Wal. So my plot has taken effect. Now if her friends can but persuade Lord Listless to repair her injuries by marriage, (and I know he has no great fondness for fighting,) the breed will be excellent, and I shall immediately put in my claim for a puppy!

Enter ZORAYDA *(in an evening dress) as from the Assembly Room.*

Wal. What, Miss Mandeville, retiring so early!—How is this?—You seem agitated!

Zor. Oh Mr. Walsingham! I know not how—I dare not—but you are Colonel Beauchamp's friend.

Wal. He has none more sincere.

Zor. A dreadful report is circulating within—a quarrel this morning—a duel—I heard the story but imperfectly, but heard enough to alarm me for Beauchamp's safety. For pity's sake, Sir, hasten to him—and should you find this report well founded.

Wal. I will strain every nerve to prevent the consequences. But what antagonist?—

Zor. Lord Listless was named.

Wal. Lord Listless! Oh! to my certain knowledge he is otherwise engaged at present, and has too much respect for his own safety to endanger any other person's. However, I'll go immediately in search of Beauchamp.—So farewell, my dear young lady! make yourself easy and depend on my care. [*Exit.*

Zor. I cannot rejoin the unfeeling crowd within! I'll to my chamber, and if possible to rest. Ah! no—there is now no rest for me!—Repose never visits my eye-lids till they close wearied with weeping: The sounds which lull me to sleep are the groans of a forsaken father, and the spirit of dreams still repeats to me his parting curse! Oh that my next slumbers might be the slumbers of the grave! Oh that my eyes could for ever shut out light, since my heart is closed against peace for ever!

SONG.

AIR—"*Auld Robin Gray.*

COLD winter frowns, but soon again
  Shall lovely spring appear;
The sun is set, but soon again
  His glorious head shall rear:
Night veils the skies, but soon shall day
  Once more illume the plain;
But never can a guilty heart
  Be soothed to peace again.

Oh! sad is my soul!
  All my nights are pass'd in tears!
I think upon my father's house,
  And all that home endears;
Think, how that father lov'd me well,
  But all his love was vain;
I broke his heart, and never shall
  Mine own know peace again. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV.—*A magnificent apartment at Modish's, illuminated.*

MODISH, TRIFLE, LADY HUBBUB, MRS. BLAB-ALL, *&c. discovered—Card Tables, &c.—Ladies and gentlemen playing at them.*

Lady Hub. Well I never heard any thing so strange! Poor Lady Clara, I'm sure I pity her excessively, though I can't but own she deserves it.

Mrs. Blab. Richly, Lady Hubbub, richly! And for my part, I shan't be sorry to see her pride have a fall; which must be the case shortly, for they say Mr. Rivers has positively refused to advance Modish a single guinea.

Trifle. Nay it's even whispered there are three executions in the house at this moment.

Lady Hub. Oh, as for that, since I have known it, *this* house has never been without an execution in it for three days together.

Mrs. Blab. Very true, and therefore I wonder that Modish should have neglected to provide himself with a rotten borough; for he ought to have known, that as he couldn't pay his debts, he had but one alternative, and must certainly get into prison unless he got into parliament.

Lady Hub. Oh! here's Lady Clara!

Enter Lady CLARA, *splendidly dressed.*

Laky Clara (as entering.) How d'ye do? Charmed to see you! Been here long? You there Trifle!—Ah, Lady Hubbub.

Lady Hub. Oh my dear Lady Clara!

Lady Clara. What's the matter?

Lady Hub. Mr. Rivers—I'm so cencerned for you!—

Mrs. Blab. I could cry with vexation!

Lady Hub. To lose such a fortune by a trick! my dear creature, it grieves me to the heart!

Mrs. Blab. And I'm told you must part with your beautiful set of cream colored ponies?—Lord! Lord! you've no idea how that distresses me!

Lady Clara. Now let me die but you're both of you very kind; and it quite delights me that I'm able to relieve you from such excessive affliction. Whatever you may have heard to the contrary, Mr. Rivers and Modish are on the best terms possible, and I hope in a few minutes to have the pleasure of making him known to you. *(aside)* Spiteful toads!

Lady Hub. No really! Lord, I'm prodigious glad to hear it. *(aside)* I wish you were both at the bottom of the Thames!

Mrs. Blab, Delighted, my dear Lady Clara; quite delighted I protest! *(Aside.)* Another birth-day suit to cut out mine, I'd lay my life on't.

Lady Clara (aside.) Well, of all earthly torments, the sympathy of ones friends is certainly the greatest.—Ah! Miss Chatterall!—Heavens! What's the matter?

Enter Miss CHATTERALL *hastily.*

Miss Chat. Oh Lady Clara! Oh Lady Hubbub!—I shall faint, Lady Hubbub I shall certainly faint.

Lady Clara. Faint! Why, What has alarmed you?

Mod. Aye, aye!—All things in order; tell your story first, and faint afterwards.

Miss Chat. Oh! your brother, Lady Clara! your vile brother! —I can't speak for passion!

Lady Clara. What has he done?

Miss Chat. What indeed? Why he has—he has—*(bursting into tears)*—he has carried me off in a sedan chair! So he has! How monstrous! wasn't it?

Lady Clara. Carried you off!—Mercy, why should he do that!

Mod. Aye, why indeed?—Oh I don't believe a word on't.

Miss Chat. Not believe it? Oh Gemini! but it's very true though; and what's more, Sir, what's more, I'm almost morally certain you're one of his accomplices!

Mod. I?—Oh fye, Miss Chatterall, fye!

All. Oh! fye, fye, fye!

Miss Chat. Fye, indeed! Fye? Oh that ever I should live to be fyed! Lady Clara, as I hope to be married, I was carried by force to your brother's house this evening; and when he first handed me out of the sedan, to give the devil his due, I must say he was civil enough; but as soon as he saw that I was I, and nobody but myself, he yawned in my face, said I was a great bore, put me into the chair, bade the men box me up tight, and, without saying another syllable, sent me back again! How disagreeable, wasn't it?—*(crying bitterly.)*—Never, no surely never before was such an insult offered to virtue, [illegible], and the first cousin of an Irish Peer!—But I'll be revenged! I'll to my law-

yer's and have an action for burglary brought against him without delay; and if law won't do me right, I warrant my Irish uncle, Sir Blarney O'Blunderbuss will!—Oh he'll come to my assistance, good soul, at first word; will insist on his Lordship's repairing by marriage the injury done to my reputation; and when I once find myself his wife—oh what a miserable wretch I'll make him! [*Exit.*

Lady Clara (laughing.) But what can all this mean? Ha? Modish, I See Rivers advancing.

Mod. (aside.) I tremble to meet him; I feel how ungratefully I have treated him; and my only consolation is, that I felt it before I knew how much my ingratitude had cost me.

Enter RIVERS *and* Mrs. ORMOND.

Mrs. Orm. (to RIVERS.*)* Remember your promise—gentleness!

Riv. Oh, never fear!

Lady Clara (*to* Mrs. ORMOND.) And here you are at last? My dear creature, you've no notion how you've agitated me; I've expected you this half hour, and was almost afraid that some accident had happened—and Mr. Rivers too, I declare!—My dear Sir, I can scarcely thank you for this visit for laughing when I think of the ridiculous affair of this morning: well I never was so quizzed in my life; but you must certainly have a world of humor!

Riv. (drily.) Um, aye, it was ridiculous enough; but yet the best part of the joke is still to come.

Lady Clara, Is it? Dear, I'm prodigiously glad to hear it, for it has entersained me so, you have no idea—

Riv. Pardon me, I can conceive it perfectly.

Lady Clara. Impossible, quite impossible! And indeed I called at your house this evening for the sole purpose of saying how extremely——

Riv. My house!—Mrs. Ormond's you mean. Your Ladyship forgets—I live at the Three Blue Posts in Little Britain.

Lady Clara [redacted]! ha! very true; and Modish must pay his respects [redacted]e Three Blue Posts, I suppose?

Riv. May I expect so much condescension from Mr. Modish?

Mod. Mr. Rivers, I will not aggravate my fault by attempting to excuse it; I am heartily ashamed of my behaviour this morning, and see myself in such offensive colors, that I cannot hope by any present submissions to obtain your pardon.

Riv. Give me your hand, Sir, the best thing is certainly not to commit a fault, but the next best is to be sorry for it when committed.—And yet, when you reflect on Lady Clara's very flattering reception of me this morning, you cannot possibly found any expectations on my assistance, though, Heaven knows, at this very moment you stand wofully in need of it.

Lady Clara. At this moment?

Riv. Certainly; for in the first place there is an execution in the house.

Trifle. Good night, Modish. [*Exit.*

Riv. There goes one! *(aside.)*—Then, Modish, Squeez'em the usurer has taken out a writ against you.

Mrs. Blab. Your servant Lady Clara, [*Exit.*

Riv. (aside.) There go two!—So that you will certainly go to prison to-morrow, unless you can borrow a considerable sum among your acquaintance—

Lady Hub. Call Lady Hubbub's servants, if you please, Sir, [*Exit.*

Riv. (aside.) There goes a third!—And can get two of your friends to stand bail for you.

All. Mr. Modish, we wish you a very good night? [*Exeunt.*

Manent RIVERS, MODISH, LADY CLARA, *and* MRS. ORMOND,

Riv. Bravo! bravo! There goes the whole covey!

Mod. Narrow hearted rascals!

Lady Clara. What, all gone!—Lord bless me!—what, all!—

Riv. Aye, aye, Lady Clara, the coast is clear; and what otherwise could you expect? what else than—

Mrs. Orm. Hush! hush! my dear Sir, surely they are already sufficiently mortified, and to punish them [redacted]ld be both cruel and unnecessary—suffer me then to plead for my brother —and—

Mod. Emily, you must plead in vain; Lady Clara's imprudence has been too gross, my ingratitude too culpable to—

Riv. May be so, George; but you may as well confine your reproaches to your own breast, since your sister has already carried the point for you, and I have promised to discharge your debts.

Mod. and Lady Clara. Dear Sir, in what manner—

Riv. Nay, no thanks, or, if you needs must pay them, offer them to Emily; they are her due, and I can tell you, George—

Enter JOHN, *delivers a letter to* MRS. ORMOND, *and Exit.*

Mrs. Orm. (after reading it.) Good Heavens!

Riv. Emily, what has alarmed you? You change color?

Mrs. Orm. Something has happened which—might I request a few moments private conversation with you?

Lady Clara. Oh! pray consider yourself at home, my dear—we leave you. *(To Modish)* Will you come, love?

Mod. Come, my life?—To be sure I will, [*Exeunt arm in arm.*

Riv. (looking at them.) Fudge!—And now Emily, what dismal tale have you to relate?

Mrs. Orm. One, my dear Sir, which interests me nearly. Soon after your leaving me this morning, I owed my rescue from the grossest impertinence to an officer, who unluckily was indebted for a large sum to the coxcomb by whom I was insulted. This note informs me, that, in consequence of having afforded me his protection, he has been arrested, and is now confined at the suit of Lord Listless.

Riv. Confined? He shall not be so long. England needs such men, nor shall she be deprived of them, while *I* can help it, —What does your friend owe?

Mrs. Orm. Not less than 3000*£*.

Riv. A large sum! But no matter! Set your heart at rest, Emily; the debt shall be discharged.

Mrs. Orm. My dear Sir!

Riv. Pshaw! dear nonsense! and his name?

Mrs. Orm. You will be surprised to hear, that my friend is no other than [redacted]champ.

Riv. (starting.) Beauchamp!—

Mrs. Orm. Even he; and his conduct this morning must convince you, that, if he has faults, he is not without virtues—but I

hasten with these good tidings to Miss Mandeville.—Oh Mr. Rivers! believe me I feel well, how trifling a gift is the wealth which you heap upon me, compared to the advantages which my son will reap from your acquaintance; much from your precepts, but more from your example. [*Exit.*

Riv. (solus.) My embarrassments increase every hour—Why, why must Beauchamp have faults to none but me?—What course shall I pursue?—Suppose—Yes! I'll discharge his debts under a feigned name, and, when he's at liberty, challenge him in my own; the first to reward his merits, the second to avenge *my* wrongs! It shall be so—and if I fall to-morrow—then may my poor Zorayda find Heaven more merciful than she found her father!—May God forgive her, but I never can. [*Exit.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—LADY CLARA'S.

ZORAYDA discovered seated on a Sofa, and leaning her head on MRS. ORMOND'S *shoulder.* LADY CLARA *is standing near her.*

LADY CLARA.

NAY, sweet Zorayda, why this despair? Probably ere this, the cause of your distress has ceased, and Beauchamp is at liberty.

Mrs. Orm. Calm your spirits, dearest girl! Believe me this excess of grief is childish, when every thing bids you hope—

Zor. Hope!—Mine is fled for ever!—My father, Madam, my father!—I planted his path with thorns; I should have strewn it with roses:—he warmed me in his bosom; the snake stung him to the heart:—he loved me, I abandoned him:—he cursed me, and I dare not hope!

Mrs. Orm. Oh blush, Zorayda! when thus sinking beneath misfortune—

Zor. Not beneath misfortune; 'tis beneath the burthen of my faults I sink. Oh! well may innocence see the lightning flash without alarm; well may virtue lift her head undaunted above the billows.—But when with sufferings comes the consciousness of their being deserved, oh they are insupportable, and I faint beneath the weight of mine!—

Mrs. Orm. Dear, unhappy girl!—Would to Heaven Rivers were returned!—Pray Lady Clara, did Zorayda see him this morning?

Lady Clara. No, I have since heard that by some unaccountable mistake he was conducted to Miss Chatterall instead of her.

Mrs. Orm. Miss Chatterall? Oh! then the case is clear, know then, my Zorayda—*(knocking without.)*

Lady Clara. Hark! a carriage stops—It must be Mr. Rivers.

Zor. (starting from the Sofa.) Oh! I fear! I fear!——

Mrs. Orm. You grow pale; retire, my love, and compose yourself.

Zor. But Beauchamp——

Mrs. Orm. As soon as I have learnt the result of Rivers's visit, I will hasten to let you know it.

Zor. And delay not, pray delay not!—Oh father, father! could you know what I feel at this moment, you would own, that, great as my faults have been, they are equalled by my sufferings! [*Exit.*

Mrs. Orm. Poor Zorayda!—Perhaps Mr. Rivers's intercession may induce her father—

Re-enter ZORAYDA *hastily through the Folding Doors.*

Zor. Save me, Madam!—Oh save me! save me!

Mrs. Orm. What alarms you?—Save you from whom?

Zor. My father! Oh my father! I saw him from the window by the flambeau's light!—Even now he entered the house.

Lady Clara and Mrs Orm. How! your father!

Riv. [redacted]ery well—I'll go up stairs.

Zor. Hark! hark! hark! 'Tis his voice, 'tis his voice!—Oh! where shall I hide me, whither fly to avoid his resentment?

Mrs Orm. I know not what—Yet surely—Fear nothing, my love: all shall yet be well—leave it to me; compose your spirits—retire, and wait till I rejoin you—Lady [redacted]a!—

Lady Clara. I will take care of her—Come, dear Zorayda!—

Zor. I obey; but, oh how cruel is it to shudder at his approach, whose sight is dearer to me than my own, and banish my self from his presence, whose embrace I would die to obtain!

[*Exit with* Lady Clara.

Mrs. Orm. Yes, I must try it; Rivers must have his daughter again.

Enter RIVERS.

Riv. So that business is done—There, Emily, set your heart at rest; your champion is free.—But hey! the deuce! you seem if possible still more disturbed than when I left you!—I hope you've not met with more impertinent peers and generous protectors?

Mrs. Orm. Not exactly, the cause of my present emotion rather concerns my former protector.

Riv. What! Beauchamp again?

Mrs. Orm. No, the business regards Beauchamp's Mistress; but I find you've made a terrible mistake.—The lady you saw here this evening was a woman of the very strictest virtue.

Riv. Zounds! what a blunder! Why the poor creature must have thought me mad, for I proposed packing her off to India without ceremony. But where then is the real Miss Mandeville? Does she not reside with Lady Clara?

Mrs. Orm. She does, and you may now, my dear Sir, execute the plan which——

Riv. Nay, I've blundered in the outset of it so confoundedly that I wish some other person——

Mrs. Orm. No one can undertake this business so properly as yourself.—I've persuaded her that your intercession with her father——

Riv. Mine! Why I don't know him even by sight!

Mrs. Orm. True—but your consequence—[redacted] connections—In short see her, talk to her; advise her—shew her the impropriety of continuing with Beauchamp, paint to her what

her father must suffer at her absence, and comfort her with the hope of obtaining his pardon;—But be gentle with her, I entreat you; moderate your naturally impetuous temper; and beware not to heap fresh anguish on an heart, whose wounds are already deep—whose sufferings are already exquisite. [*Exit.*

Riv. Poor Emily! She little thinks that the man from whose friendship she hopes so much, in a few hours will either be expiring himself, or a fugitive from England, stained with the blood of Beauchamp! My will, however secures her in affluence, and after that—

Enter Mrs. ORMOND *and* ZORAYDA *veiled, through the Folding Doors.*

Riv. But see, she comes with her protogée—Ha! veiled, I see!

Mrs Orm. (aside to Zorayda.) Nay, dearest girl, why thus terrified? Doubt it not, all will turn out well.

Zor. (aside to Mrs. Ormond.) Yes, yes! 'tis he!—How I tremble at his presence!

Mrs Orm. In vain have I endeavored, my dear Sir, to convince Miss Mandeville that she dreads, without reason, the severity of your strictures. I assure her that you will speak to her—

Riv. Most soothingly! most kindly! even as a father would speak to his daughter.

Mrs. Orm. (eagerly.) Right! exactly right! Remember your promise—Speak to her as an indulgent father would to his daughter, his beloved and repentant daughter. I leave you with her. My dear girl—

Zor. (embracing her.) Oh, Madam!

Mrs. Orm. (aside.) Would it were over! Yet what should I dread? I know well the excellence of his nature; and hard indeed must that heart be which can listen unmoved to the pleading of such a penitent. [*Exit.*

Riv. (After a pause.) I—I—presume, Miss Mandeville, you are aware how delicate a task Mrs. Ormand has imposed on me. *(Zorayda bows.)* So delicate, in truth, that no sentiment could induce me to [illegible]king it less strong than gratitude for your generous intentions towards myself, and the interest which Emily's account of you first inspired me with, and which your own appearance could not fail to increase.

Zor. (aside.) Oh that dear voice! yet how terrible it sounds!

Riv. I will not dwell upon the worth of public opinion, the blessings of self-satisfaction, the torments of present shame and of future remorse; I know full well how light these considerations weigh against love when a young hand holds the ballance. 'Twas your heart which led you astray; to your heart then will I make my appeal; and, if it be not marble, I shall not make my appeal in vain. Miss Mandeville, I will speak of your father—will explain how heavy is a father's curse—will paint how dreadful is a father's anguish!—Well can I describe that anguish! I have felt it, feel it still! I once had a daughter!—

Zor. (aside.) His voice faulters!

Riv. This daughter—Oh! how I loved her, words cannot say—thought cannot measure!—This daughter sacrificed me for a villain, fled from my paternal roof, and—her flight has broken my heart—her ingratitude has dug my grave!—

Zor. (aside.) How I suffer!—Oh my God!

Riv. (recovering himself.) Young Lady, my daughter's seducer was Beauchamp! He has deserted her; so, doubt it not, will he desert you. My execration is upon her! Oh! let not your father's fall upon *you* as heavy. Haste to him ere it be too late! Wait not till his resentment becomes rooted—'till his resolve becomes immutable—'till he sheds such burning tears as I now shed—'till he suffers such bitter pangs as I now suffer—'till he curses as I now curse—

Zor. (throwing aside her veil, and sinking on her knees.) Spare me! spare me!

Riv. Zorayda!—*(After a pause.)* Away!

Zor. Pardon! pardon!

Riv. Leave me, girl!

Zor. While I have life, never again! Never; no, not even though you still frown on me! Nay, struggle not!—Father, I am a poor desperate distracted creature! Still shall my lips, till sealed by death, cry to you for mercy—still will I thus clasp my father's hand, till he cuts off mine, or else forgives me!

Riv. Zorayda! Girl!—Hence, foolish t[illegible]

Zor. I hope not for kindness, I sue but for pardon—I ask not to live happy in your love, I plead but to die soothed by

your forgiveness.—Still loath my fault, frown not on me still, dash me on the earth, trample me in the dust, kill me—but forgive me!

Riv. Her voice—her tears—I can support them no longer.

[*Breaks from her and hastens to the door.*]

Zor. [*Wringing her hands in despair.*] Cruel! cruel! My God! my God! Oh! were my mother but alive!

Riv. [*starting.*] Her mother!

Zor. Ah! he stops. She lives then! lives too in his heart!—Oh! plead thou for me, sainted spirit! plead thou too, in former sorrows my greatest comfort, in present sufferings my only hope!—[*taking a picture from her bosom*] Look on it, my father! 'tis the portrait of your wife, of your adored Zorayda!—Look on these eyes—you have so often said they were like mine. Be moved by my voice—you have so often said it reminded you of my mother's!—'Tis she who thus sinks at your feet—'tis she who now cries to you, pardon your erring, your repentant child!—Father, I stand on the brink of ruin! already the ground gives way beneath my feet—yet a moment, and I am lost!—Save me! Father, save me! If not for my sake, if not for your own, oh father, father! save me for my mother's sake!

Riv. (*looking alternately at the portrait and her.*) Zorayda—Zorayda!—My child! my child! (*Sinks upon her bosom.*)

Enter MODISH, LADY, CLARA, *and* MRS. ORMOND.

Mrs. Orm. He yields, and we triumph.

Riv. (*Recovering himself.*) Yet mark me. Zorayda—Beauchamp—

Zor. Alas!

Riv. Never must you meet again; to-morrow either sees him stained with my blood, or this hand must—

Enter BEAUCHAMP *and* WALSINGHAM.

All. How! Beauchamp.

Riv. Astonishment!—(*To Zorayda sternly*) Follow me!

Beau. Stay, Mr. Rivers; hear me for one moment.

Riv. Hear you? Amazing confidence!—What? hear you extenuate your crime? hear you say that—

Beau. That I am guilty, that misery ought to be my lot; but that, if *my* lot be misery, it must also be Zorayda's. On your affection for her I throw myself. Great have been my faults, great have been Zorayday's injuries—yet, if suffered to repair them—

Riv. Repair them! and your wife—

Beau. Her death has been long reported; this letter, just received, ascertains the fact. My hand is free, and from the first moment I beheld her that hand was destined to your daughter. I feel how little I deserve her—feel the whole weight of my offence, and loath myself for its commission:—but my punishment would be Zorayday's—but Zorady's fate is interwoven with mine. Be this my plea, when thus I kneel before you, imploring permission to expiate my faults to your daughter and yourself by affection for my wife and unremitting attention to her father.

Wal. Nor imagine, Sir, that your wealth influences this proposal. Continue still your dispositions in Mrs. Ormond's favor; my fortune is ample, it has long been destined to Beauchamp, and the day which makes him your son makes him my heir.

Riv. *(hesitating.)* I know not—I ought not—

Mrs. Orm. Dear Sir, if *my* entreaties—

Wal. If my advice—

Zor. *(embracing him.)* Dear, dear father!

All. Pardon! pardon!

Riv. I am vanquished! Rise, rise my son, and receive from me Zorayda!

Beau. My love, my wife! Oh, teach me to thank your father for so invaluable a gift!

Zor. Edward, to be yours, and with his approbation!—Dear, dear Sir, is not all this a dream? Am I indeed again your Zorayda? Is your affection indeed mine again?

Riv. Yours it was ever; and surely, had I loved you less, I had been appeased more easily. Many a pang, my child, has your absence cost me; but the pleasure of this moment overpays them all. Sweet, oh! sweet are a father's tears shed on the bosom of a repentant child. Hear this, ye flinty-hearted—hear it, and pardon!—Yet how is this? when every other face wears a smile, why hangs a cloud on the brow of my Zorayda?

Zor. Ah, my father! 'tis a cloud which must never be removed; for 'tis the gloom of self-reproach!—I have erred, and been forgiven; but am I therefore less culpable?—Your indulgence has been great; but is my fault therefore less enormous? Oh, no, no, no! The calm of innocence has for ever left me, the courage of conscious virtue must be mine no more! Still must the memory of errors past torment me, and embitter every future joy:—Still must I blush to read scorn in the world's eye, suspicion in my husband's—and still must feel this painful truth most keenly, that she who once deviates from the paths of virtue, though she may obtain the forgiveness of others, never can obtain her own!

EPILOGUE.

BY THE AUTHOR.

THUNDER AND LIGHTNING.

The Ghost of QUEEN ELIZABETH *rises in a Flash of Fire.*

STARE not, fair dames, nor criticize my dress;
You see before you jolly old Queen Bess,
Who from the land of roasting, boiling, stewing,
Is come to see what you above are doing!
Below, where some slight piccadilloes sent me,
Long did a wish, a foolish wish torment me,
For some few days in Britain to revive,
And view that land once more, I lov'd so well alive:—
This wish so teas'd me, morn, night, noon and eve,
That I resolv'd to ask old Pluto's leave;
And though I knew to gain the point was hard,
Boldly dispatch'd Lord Burleigh with this card.
" Queen Bess's comp'ts to Pluto—begs to say
" She hopes this card will find him well to-day;
" And should her visit now convenient be,
" Means to drink sulphur with his majesty."
For in our lower realms the truth to utter,
Sulphur means tea, and brimstone bread and butter.
Well, he receiv'd me, and (my sulphur sip'd,)
"Dear Sir," quoth I—" I'm nervous, sick, and hip'd,
" Besides have frightful dreams, and truth to speak,
" Scarce eat a chicken's pinion in a week.

Flax. What aileth thee brother ?

Erlach. Scarce could I refrain from flouriſhing my rattan about his ears.

Flax. Of whom art thou ſpeaking ?

Erlach. Of the moſt accompliſh'd Viſcount de Maillac, my raſcally brother-in-law.

Flax. (*aſtoniſhed.*) Thy brother-in-law !

Erlach. The wretch has the honor to be Emma's brother, and is aſhamed of his poor mother : juſt now, with his uſual impertinence, he ſkipp'd thro' the garden gate, when Madame Moreau perceiv'd him, ſhe cried aloud, my ſon ! it was a voice, that might have melted flint, the puppy ſtarted, and ſeem'd alarmed, but impudence would not leave him in the lurch, he ſnuffled, the lady is miſtaken—we ſhudder'd and explained to him, every one in his way, how the matter ſtood, Emma called him brother, and I a ſwindler, meanwhile, the agitated mother with uplifted hands, ſeem'd anxiouſly expecting a filial token, to fly into his arms ; it was truly ever my wiſh, muttered the wretch, to be allied to the Flaxland family, but if this be the only alternative——And ſo he ſhrugg'd his ſhoulders, folded himſelf like a ſnake, and darted out of the gate : I called after him, fellow, among all the ſpecies of falſe ſhame the moſt attrocious is, to be aſhamed of ones poor parents, becauſe one wants the reſolution, to brave the miſerable raillery of a few courtly mendicants.

Flax. My poor ſiſter ! where is ſhe ?

Erlach. The girls are endeavoring to dry her tears, here ſhe comes, behold, how quickly a mother's affliction bleaches the cheeks.

SCENE XI. MADAME MOREAU, HUGEL, MINNA, EMMA, *and the former.*

Flax (*meeting her*) My good ſiſter !

Moreau. I beſeech thee brother, do not mention him, let no one name him more ; you could not but condemn him, and his mother could not attempt his defence. He is far gone indeed, when maternal affection muſt be ſilent ! Ah ! had he died in the cradle, I might have exclaimed, death has robb'd me of a lovely boy !

Emma. (*careſſing her*) You have yet two children.

Moreau. The loſt child is always the moſt lamented.

Flax. We muſt not expect cloudleſs days !

Moreau. Forgive me, I will not murmur ; God has been today ſo indulgent to me ! Ah what was I, but a few hours paſt ? Come to my arms, my deareſt children ! (*ſhe embraces Erlach and Emma, and drops her head on her daughter's boſom*)

Erlach. I pledge you my hand, mother, I will re-inſtate you the boy!

Mrs. Flax. What is it I ſee? our woman-hater converted?

Minna. Theſe ſudden convertites are not always the moſt ſecure.

Erlach. Miſs Wiſdom, learn from me, that from all proverbs and ſayings, love is ever excepted.

Minna. But after having ſo often vowed eternal hatred to the ſex.

Hugel. To the ſex, but not to angels

Erlach. Well ſaid, my good coz.

Minna. (to Hugel) Sweet Sir, it is written, you muſt have only eyes for me:—if this applies to the green bridal ſapling, what muſt not one expect from the mature ſeaſon'd wedding tree?—Take my father as an example—he is no longer a youngſter, has been three years married, and behold how his eyes dwell enamoured on my mother!

Flax. Emulate her example, ſhe has to-day made me the happieſt of men! Rejoice, Erlach, we remove into the country.

Erlach. Amen.

Mrs. Flax. Thank him, my dear Flaxland.

Erlach. Huſh!—do not betray me.

Flax. A friend thanks not with words.

Erlach. Cheerly my hearts!—here is a happy group—an angel would not bluſh to deſcend among us—your ears have been regaled this morning with many a ditty—now, to pleaſe me, you muſt all join in the ſong—ſtrike up muſicians—joy! planet of paradiſe!—Elyſium's child!

The muſic behind the ſcenes, plays Schillers Ode to joy, Flaxland takes his wife under the right, and his Siſter under the left arm, joined on one ſide by Erlach and Emma, and on the other, by Minna and Hugel.—Thus encircled they ſing:

Ye, who in life's lottery bleſt,
Where friendſhip, kindred ſouls unites;
Ye of endearing wives poſſeſt,
Hymen, to this feaſt invites!

The curtain drops, and the ſounds die gradually away.

FINIS.

THE

EAST INDIAN:

A COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

As Performed at the Theatre-Royal, Drury-Lane.

By M. G. LEWIS, Esq. M. P.

Author of the MONK, CASTLE SPECTRE, *&c.*

Quadringenta tibi si quis Deus, aut similis Diis,
Et melior fatis donaret, homuncio quantus
Ex nihilo fieres, quantus Virronis amicus!
" Da Trebio!"—" Pone ad Trebium!"—" Vis, Frater, ab ipsis
" Illibus?"—O nummi, vobis hunc præstat honorem!
Vos estis Fratres!

JUVENAL, Sat. 5.

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1800.

AS PERFORMED AT THE THEATRE,
NEW-YORK.

Dramatis Personæ.

Lord Listless, - - - - -	Mr. Jefferson.
Modish, - - - - -	Mr. Tyler.
Rivers, - - - - -	Mr. Hodgkinson.
Beauchamp, - - - -	Mr. Martin.
Walsingham, - - - -	Mr. Hallam.
Frank, - - - - -	Mr. Powel.
Squeez'em, - - - - -	Mr. Hogg.
Friponeau, - - - -	Mr. Fox.
Trifle, - - - - -	Mr. Hallam, jun.
John, - - - - -	Mr. M'Donald.
Robert, - - - - -	Mr. Leonard.
Lady Clara Modish - - -	Mrs. Melmoth.
Mrs. Ormand, - - - -	Mrs. Powel.
Miss Chatteral, - - - -	Mrs. Hogg.
Zorayda, - - - - -	Mrs. Hodgkinson.
Mrs. Slip-slop, - - - -	Miss. Brett.
Lady Hubbub, - - - -	Miss Hogg.
Mrs. Blaball, - - - -	Mrs, Brett.
Mrs. Tiffany, - - - -	Miss Harding.
Anne, - - - - -	Mrs. King.

PREFACE.

THE Plot of this Comedy, as far as regards Rivers's visit to Modish and Mrs. Ormand, was taken from the Novel of Sidney Biddulph; Mr. Sheridan had already borrowed the same incident from the same source, and employed it (though in a different manner) in the "School for Scandal."

THE "East Indian" was admirably well acted from beginning to end, particularly the part of Rivers by Mr. Kemble; nothing was overcharged, nothing under-acted. Indeed, to call his performance *acting*, is doing it injustice: It was nature throughout.

THIS Comedy was written before I was sixteen. It was performed last season for the benefits of Mrs. Jordon and Mrs. Powell, and, in consequence of the approbation with which it was received, was brought forward again in last December. It was again received with applause, for which I thank the public; the succeeding representations did not prove attractive, for which I here make my acknowledgements to Mr. Sheridan, who blocked up my road, mounted on his great tragic war-horse Pizarro, and trampled my humble pad-nag of a

Comedy under foot without the least compunction. My readers must decide, whether my Play merited so transient an existence; it is unnecessary to say, that I am quite of the contrary opinion.

M. G. LEWIS.

Jan. 14, 1800.

PROLOGUE.

WRITTEN By the AUTHOR.

IN life's gay spring, while yet the careless hours
Dance light on blooming beds of early flowers,
Ere knowledge of the world has taught the mind
To sorrow for itself and shun mankind,
In sweet vain dreams still fancy bids the boy
Doat on fair prospects of ideal joy;
Life's choicest fruits then court his eager hand;
Each eye is gentle, and each voice is bland;
False friendship prompts no sigh, and draws no tear,
And love seems scarce more beauteous, than sincere!

Ere sixteen years had wing'd their wanton flight,
While yet his head was young, and heart was light,
Our author plann'd these scenes; and while he drew,
How bright each color seem'd, each line how true.
Gods! with what rapture every speech he spoke!
Gods! how he chuckled as he penn'd each joke!
And when at length his ravish'd eyes survey
That wondrous work complete—a Five Act play,
His youthful heart how self applauses swell!
—"It isn't perfect, but its vastly well!"—

Since then, with many a pang, our Bard has bought
More just decision, and less partial thought;
Kind vanity no longer blinds his sight,
His fillet falls, and lets in odious light.
Time bids the darling work its leaves expand,
Each flower Parnassian withers in his hand;
Stern judgment every latent fault detects,
And all its fancied beauties prove defects.

Yet, for she thinks some scenes possess an art
To please the fancy and to melt the heart,

Thalia bids his play to-night appear,
Thalia call'd in Heaven, but Jordon here.*
So frail his hope, so weak he thinks his cause,
Our author says he dares not ask applause;
He only begs, that with indulgence new,
You'll hear him patiently and hear him through:
Then, if his piece proves worthless, never sham it;
But damn it, gentle friends—Oh! damn it! damn it!

* *The Comedy was first performed for the benefit of Mrs. Jordan.*

THE

EAST INDIAN.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Room in an Hotel.*

WALSINGHAM *is seated by a table;* ROBERT *waiting.*

WALSINGHAM.

BEAUCHAMP, say you?

Rob. I think, that's the gentleman's name, Sir.

Wal. Show him up—[*Exit Robert.*]—I'am glad that he's returned to England; for, though a young man, and a gay man, Beauchamp is among the few whom I esteem.

Enter BEAUCHAMP.

My dear Ned!

Beau. Mr. Walsingham!—This pleasure is quite unexpected; but where have you been concealed these hundred years? I was afraid, that Cynthia wearied of her Endymion had pitched upon *you* for his successor, and believed you at this moment an inhabitant of the moon.

Wal. No, no, my young friend; the goddess has too much taste to select such an old weather-beaten fellow for a Cecisbeo. But if you seriously ask, what I've been doing for these last three years, you must know, I've been fool-hunting.

Beau. Fool-hunting?

Wal. Yes, being of an adust cynical constitution, infinite laughter is absolutely necessary for my health; for this purpose my physician prescribed me a course of fools, and truly I've reaped great benefit from his advice.

Beau. Why then leave Great Britain? Heaven knows, a scarcity of fools is not one of our wants!

Wal. True; but the growth of English absurdity for the year '95 not being to my taste, I determined to change my fools, as other invalids change the air; but after all I must give the preference to the folly of my own country.

Beau. Your own country is very much obliged to you; but since this is your taste, I've a superb feast for you in Lord Listless.

Wal. What, your uncle?

Beau. No; to my sorrow he sleeps with his fore-fathers, while my noble cousin possesses his title and estate, and, what is worst, has me entirely in his power.

Wal. How so?

Beau. 'Tis a tedious story; but the short of it is, that when I married, my generous uncle discharged my debts to the tune of £.3000: unluckily he neglected to destroy my acknowledgement, which falling into his son's hands, the present Earl wisely keeps it, and calls himself my sole creditor. Discharge it for some time I cannot; but, however, unless we disagree, he will not press me for immediate payment.

Wal. Well, well, and even if he should, we'll find means to satisfy him; and so away with that gloomy face, dear Ned! As soon as I saw you, I guessed that something was wrong; but I'm glad 'twas nothing more than a pecuniary difficulty.

Beau. Would to Heaven, it were!

Wal. Hey? why what other cause—

Beau. Oh! Mr. Whlsingham, how shall I tell you. . . . .

Wal. Out with it!

Beau. That I have been. . . . . That I still am. . . . . a villain!

Wal. I don't believe one word of it: he, who dares own that he has been a villain, must needs already have ceased to be one.

Beau. Hear me then, and judge for yourself—You knew well the character of the woman, to whose fate, while I was still a stripling, accident not affection united mine.

Wal. Yes, and a miserable life she led you!

Beau. Jealous without love, profuse without generosity, negligent in her dress, violent in her temper, coarse in her manners,

with no virtue but that one which she owed to constitution, not to principle, during three years she rendered my home an hell. My patience was at length exhausted; I made over to her the remnants of an estate which her extravagance had ruined, bade this domestic fiend an eternal farewell, and sailed, under the assumed name of Dorimant, to India.

Wal. I see no harm as yet. Lived with her three years? I wouldn't have lived with her three days..... No! not to have buried her on the fourth.

Beau. Soon after my arrival, it was my chance to save the life of the famous Mortimer, who....

Wal. The Nabob, whose immense wealth.....

Beau. The same. This procured me admission to his house, where I saw his daughter: She was lovely and grateful to me for the preservation of her father's life; opportunities of seeing each other were frequent, and in an unguarded moment..... yet heaven can witness to my intentions!..... in an unguarded moment!..... I—I was a villain!

Wal. (shaking his head.)—Little better, I must say!

Beau. Her weakness and *my* perfidy were soon discovered. Marry her, I could not; her father's wrath was dreadful; she sought a refuge from it in *my* arms, and fled with me from India.

Wal. From India, and from her father? Young man! Young man! And what says your wife to all this?

Beau. Soon after our separation, I find that she went abroad, nor has she been heard of for near two years either by her banker, or her friends. Report says, that she is dead: If so, my hand is Zorayda's; and in the mean while she resides with my cousin, Lady Clara Modish.

Wal. Lady Clara! And how the devil came *she* to receive her?

Beau. The Devil made her, the great Devil of all! Money, man, darling money! Her Ladyship had been extravagant, and so I paid a gaming debt or two for her: besides this, the appearance of protecting a friendless orphan flatters that ostentatious sensibility, which it is her passion to display on every occasion.

Wal. But does she know the history of her protegée?

Beau. I was compelled to trust her with it under a promise of profound secrecy.

Wal. And how has she kept her promise?

Beau. Why really extremely well, considering she's a woman of fashion. She only confided it to her most intimate friends, who told it again to all their particular acquaintance, who repeated to every creature they knew; and now the whole town is informed of the whole transaction.

Wal. And you really have the heart to present this poor young creature to the world in a light so despicable?

Beau. Spare your reproaches, my dear, Sir, they have already been made by a very able advocate. You remember Modish's sister, Emily?

Wal. Young Ormand's widow—A charming creature!

Beau. She is interested about Zorayda, and has frequently written to me on this subject. Her remonstrances have carried with them conviction, and I am resolved to wait on her this morning to entreat her protection for Zorayda: and, should she grant it, to engage, cruel as it will be to the feelings of us both, no more to visit my love, till I can offer her my hand and fortune.

Wal. A very good resolution too: I long to see your goddess.

Beau. Come then to Lady Clara's, and behold the fictitious charms of modish beauty effaced by the native graces, the enchanting simplicity of my artless, my bewitching Zorayda! But as this is but weak attraction for a satyrist, if you still exclaim, "Thou, Folly, art my goddess!" I can promise you some diversion in your own way; for Lady Clara's table is seldom unsupplied with a plentiful banquet of fools.

Wal. Every table in town may be supplied with that article at a very small expence, I doubt not; for, after all my peregrinations in quest of folly, I am decided, that no country abounds more with that luxury than little England; where absurdities spring as kindly as mushrooms upon dunghills, and you can't turn a corner without starting a fool! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Lady Clara's.*

Enter MRS. TIFFANY *and* SLIP-SLOP.

Mrs. Tif. No really, Mrs. Slip-slop, I can't stay a moment longer, and I'm sure her La'ship will find the dress quite the thing.

Slip. Can't you confer your departure for one quarter of an hour, Mrs. Tiffany? My Lady'll be mightily aspirated, if you go without seeing her.

Mrs. Tiff. *(ringing the bell.)* Quite impossible! There's Lady Tawdry, Lady Tick, Miss Flash, and Lady Rachel Round-about all waiting for me at this very moment.

Enter JOHN.

My chariot and servants, if you please, Sir.— [*Exit John.*] —Good morning, Mrs. Slip-slop. [*Exit.*

Mrs. Slip. My chariot and servants!—Lud! Lud!—how I detest and extricate that conceited trollop! She affects to contemnify me too, and why? Sure my figure and hidication an't anterior to hers; and as to birth, I hope my contraction's are as extinguished as Mrs. Tiffany's, or truly I should be sorry for it!

Enter ZORAYDA.

Zor. Is the mantau-maker gone, Mrs. Slip-slop?

Mrs. Slip. Yes; but left this note for you, Miss. *(Zorayda reads.)* Superscribed, I see, to Miss Mandeville, though she knows well enough that's only a consumed name. Now do tell me, dear Miss, what is your right one? What is your real abomination?

Zor. Impertinent questions, Mrs. Slip-slop.

Mrs. Slip. Oh! but if you'll only tell me, I'll be so secret.....

Zor. Of that I'm certain, Mrs. Slip-slop; for I well believe—

> Thou wilt not utter what thou dost not know,
> And so far will I trust thee, gentle Slip-slop!

Mrs. Slip. So far, indeed!

Zor. Not a jot farther.

Enter JOHN.

John. Lord Listless. [*Exit.*

Mrs. Slip. *(aside.)* Miss keeps her secret as close as if

'twere a scheme she had prevented for paying off the natural debt, and was frightful that somebody would embellish her ideras.

[*Exit.*

Enter Lord LISTLESS.

Lord List. Quite alone, Miss Mandeville! Where's Clara?

Zor. Still at breakfast in her dressing-room. She slept ill, and left her bed late this morning.

Lord List. She was quite in the right: for my part I wonder why people leave their beds at all, for they only contrive to bore themselves and their acquaintance. Now I've some thoughts of going to bed one of these nights, and never getting up again.

Zor. Oh! pray, my Lord, put that scheme into execution, for the benefit of your friends as well as yourself.

Lord List. Yes, 'twould certainly take, for people imitate every thing I do so ridiculously, that 'pon my soul I'm bored to death with them; but, to say the truth, I'm bored with every thing and every body.

Zor. I should be sorry to increase your ennui, and so wish you good morning.

Lord List. No, no; stay, pray stay; for there's nothing I like so much as the company of Ladies.

Zor. *(drawing away her hand.)* I'm sorry that I can't return the compliment; but there's nothing I like so little as the company of Lords!

Lord List. Umph! Pert enough, 'pon my soul!

Enter Lady CLARA.

Lord List. Morning, Clara! You look frightful to-day.

Lady Clara. Do I? I dare say I do: for my nerves are in such a state!—Oh! and then I had such a dream!—Only conceive; Me thought my favorite little Pug, Fidelio, had fallen into the Serpentine; I saw him struggling, heard him barking, and awoke in an agony of tears!

Zor. Exquisite sensibility!

Lady Clary. Ha, Beauchamp!

Enter BEAUCHAMP *and* WALSINGHAM.

Beau. Let me present a friend to you, Lady Clara, whose absence from England you've heard me frequently lament—Mr. Walsingham.

Lady Clara. Your friends are always welcome here for *your* sake; but Mr. Walsingham will be welcome for his own.

Wal. Your Ladyship does me honor.—*(aside to Beauchamp.)* Is she a fool too?

Beau. None of the wisest I promise you.—Miss Mandeville, Mr. Walsingham. *(Zorayda curtesies.)*

Wal. Mandeville? I've known several of that name. Who—

Lady Clara. (laughing.) Yes; but not of Miss Mandeville's family, I take it. Were they, Zorayda?

Beau. (aside to Walsingham.) Hush! Mandeville's an assumed name.

Wal. Oh! the devil! Why didn't you tell me so before?

Beau. But, Lady Clara, I've another friend to introduce.

Lady Clara. I shall be very .... *(turning round; then with indifference)*—Oh, you wretch! my husband!

Zor. (aside to Beauchamp.) You couldn't have introduced a greater stranger.

Enter MODISH.

Mod. Mr. Walsingham, I rejoice to see you. Just returned, I suppose?—You rested well, I hope, Lady Clara? *(carelessly.)*

Lady Clara. perfectly; never passed a quieter night in my life.

[JOHN *delivers a Letter to* MODISH, *and goes off.*]

Mod. (Opens, and then throws it on the table.) Rivers.

Wal. I beg I mayn't prevent.....

Mod. Oh! It's from a poor relation; 'twill keep.—Beauchamp, were you at Lady Sparkle's last night?

Beau. Yes: and found it very fashionable, and very dull.

Lady Clara. Oh! the terms are now synonimous.

Mod. Quite; for since everything that's fashionable is insipid, in mere justice every thing that's insipid must be fashionable!

Wal. Indeed! is this really so my Lord?

Lord List. Matter of fact, Sir, 'pon my soul! insipidity is now the very criterion of fashion. A man of *ton* should never dance but when he's not wanted, or sing but when nobody wishes to hear him. He should yawn at a comedy, laugh at a tragedy,

cry "damn'd bore" at both, tread upon his neighbor's toes, hunt with a tooth-pick in his mouth, see women tumble down stairs without trying to stop them, and, in order to be perfectly fashionable, should make himself completely disagreeable!

Zor. Bless me! how admirably your Lordship's practice exemplifies your theory?

Lord List. Oh! you flatter me.

Zor. No really; I do you but justice when I protest that I never saw any thing half so fashionable or insipid as your Lordship.

Wal. Nor I, upon my honor!

Lord List. 'Pon my soul you're too obliging! too obliging! 'pon my soul!

Lady Clara. Hark! A knock!

Zor. *(looking from the window.)* Now Heaven preserve my hearing! 'tis Miss Chatterall.

Lady Clara. I'm glad of it, she always talks scandal, and scandal is the best thing in the world for the nerves.

Lord List. And she talks incessantly, which saves one the trouble of an answer.

Zor. But she is so malicious!

Lady Clara. She cheats horribly at play!

Mod. She's disagreeable and affected.

Lord List. She's a bore.

Beau. She's deceitful.

Lady Clara. She's abominable. . . .

Enter MISS CHATTERALL.

Lady Clara. My dear creature, I'm so charmed to see you! We've not met this age!

Miss Chat. Oh, Lady Clara! such a dreadful thing has happened to me! I've been so shocked, and so quizzed, and all that!

Lady Clara. You alarm me!

Miss Chat. You must know, as I came along, another carriage got entangled with mine. A mob soon collected round us, and out of pure good nature and condescension, I thought I'd entertain them with a little graceful terror.

Lady Clara. How kind!

Miss Chat. Wasn't it?—So, on this, I screamed in the most delightful way imaginable, practised my new Parisot attitudes, and threw myself into my very best convulsions.

Mod. And, I warrant, the spectators burst into tears?

Miss Chat. No truly, they burst out a laughing!

All. Oh, shameful!

Miss Chat. Wasn't it!—I declare I was just like Orphy, the old fiddler, playing to the stocks and stones! the more I squalled the more they laughed; and at last they made me so angry that I vowed never to go into fits again, except in the very best company.

Wal. And a mighty proper resolution too!

Miss Chat. Wasn't it?—but, Modish, what provoked me most was your uncle; that great gawky creature, General Truncheon. He never offered to help me the least bit. And then he ha-ha-hae'd, and he-he-he'd, and all that so, you've no idea! —How shocking! wasn't it?

Mod. Oh! you know my uncle's a blockhead; he's supposed to have the greatest body and least wit of any man in London.

Zor. That follows of course: I've observed that in lofty houses the upper apartments are always the worst furnished.

Miss Chat. Very well, Miss Mandeville; extremely well indeed!—*(aside)* I'll remember that, and sport it for my own.—But, Lord! I must be gone, or Lady Cogwell will be out, and I wouldn't miss seeing her for the world.

Lady Clara. Lady Cogwell! I thought she was your aversion!

Miss Chat. Oh dear, so she is; but last night Mrs. Punt, playing with her at whist, found the ace of diamonds hid in her muff; so I'm going to comfort, and console, and vex, and teaze her; and all that you know. Modish, lead me to my carriage. You won't go with me, Miss Mandeville?

Zor. No; I'm not in a vexing, teazing, and all that humor this morning. But are you sure of the truth of this story?

Miss Chat. Sure of it? Why Mrs. Blab-all told it me, and I believe all she says to be gospel, for she has talked scandal to me every morning for this year and a half past, and in all that time never told the least bit of a lye. How kind of her! wasn't it?

Lady Clara. Are you going, Mrs. Walsingham? we dine at at home; if you can put up with a family dinner—*(he bows, and*

exit with Beaubump.)—You'll be with me in the evening, Miss Chatterall.

Miss Chat. Oh! without fail, and I hope by that time to have collected authentic information concerning two elopements, four young men ruined at play, nine ladies of quality taken tripping with their footmen, and one who died of a cold which she caught in going to church. How comical! Wasn't it? Come, Modish! [*Exit with Modish.*

Lord List. Pray Clara.... What was I going to.... Oh! where does Mrs. Ormand live?

Lady Clara. I protest I've forgotten, but the porter can tell you. May I ask, why you enquire?

Lord List. I've no sort of objection to your asking the question, provided you've have none to my not answering it. Good morning; we shall meet at dinner; or perhaps not till to-morrow; or perhaps not this month; it doesn't signify, you know, if we never meet at all.

Lady Clara. Oh! not in the least—Good morning.

[*Exit Lord Listless.*

Zor. I see Mr. Modish returning; shall I stay, or leave you to your usual discussions? perhaps my presence may prevent....

Lady Clara. Oh! child, don't mind me: these little matrimonial rubs are excellent for the vapours, and Modish is never so entertaining as when I've put him out of temper.

Zor. I'm sure then he's entertaining very often, but I cannot admire your mode of making him so; and for my own part I verily think that were I to live a thousand years, I could never succeed in extracting amusement from my husband's uneasiness, or find pleasure in being the torment of a man, whom I had sworn before the altar to love and to obey! [*Exit.*

Enter MODISH.

Lady Clara. (*humming an Italian air, opens Modish's letter thoughtlessly.*)—Lud! what am I doing! Beg your pardon, Modish, I've not read ten words upon my honor.

Mod. 'Twas of no consequence.

Lady Clara. Oh! it might have been from a lady, and I've no wish to pry into your secrets.

Mod. This letter comes from a relation, who after dissipating his fortune here went to India some eighteen years ago—Let me see what he says—" My dear cousin will be surprised to find that a man still exists, whom I doubt not he has long numbered with the dead: Still more will it surprise you to know, that soon after my arrival in India, my union with a rich widow at once cleared me of debt, and placed me in a state of opulence."

Lady Clara. Opulence? This grows interesting.

Mod. " On my wife's death I realized my fortune, determined to share it with you, my dear George."

Lady Clara. The worthy man! Who waits? Send Slip-slop to me.—I'll have a chamber prepared this instant.

Mod. " But fate was not yet weary of persecuting me; the vessel in which I had embarked my wealth was shipwrecked, and I regained the English shore, poor as I left it."

Lady Clara. Then the money's lost.

Enter SLIP-SLOP.

Slip. Did your La'ship....

Lady Clara. It doesn't signify, Slip-slop. [*Exit* Slip-slop.

Mod. " To you then, my dear George, I must apply for assistance, and soon after receiving this you may expect a visit from your affectionate cousin and friend, WILLIAM RIVERS.

Lady Clara. How unlucky! This money would have been so seasonable—

Mod. Seasonable, madam? Say, necessary, absolutely necessary; and what has made it so? Your dissipation, your extravagance, your—

Lady Clara Oh! mercy, dear Modish, mercy! Moderate your tone, I beg; consider my nerves.

Mod. My manner, madam, may be moderate, but the matter must be harsh.

Lady Clara. Oh! Sir, let but your voice be gentle, and as to the matter of what you say, I shan't mind it a straw.

Mod. What I say, Madam, you never do mind.

Lady Clara. True, Sir; I never do.

Mod. Madam, Madam, I must say, and I will say—

Lady Clara. Say, Sir? Lord, couldn't you sing? 'Twould be much more agreeable.

Mod. Zounds, Madam, I'm serious, and well I may be so. My affairs are so embarassed that I expect an execution in the house every day, and but one way remains of preventing it. You must give up your diamonds, I'll procure you paste instead; and as you are known to possess real jewels, nobody will suspect those you wear to be false.

Lady Clara. Well, Sir, I'll only mention one circumstance, and then if you still wish it, the diamonds are at your disposal.

Mod. (aside)—So readily? I'm amazed!—Well, my dear Lady Clara, and this circumstance is—

Lady Clara. Simply this. About three months ago I sold the real jewels, and those now in my possesion are the paste.*

Mod. (violently)—Confusion! Fire, and Furies!

Lady Clara. Don't swear, Sir!

Mod. Zounds! Madam, I must and will swear, and I must and will tell you once for all—

Enter JOHN.

John. Mr. Rivers. [*Exit.*

Mod. He has nicked the time: I never felt less charitably disposed in my life.—*(Throws himself into a chair, his back turned to Lady Clara, who sits in an indolent posture, humming to herself.*

Enter RIVERS.

Riv. It is with diffidence, Sir, that I venture.—

Lady Clara. Oh! Heavens! A black scratch! Drops! drops, or I shall faint!—*(Modish rings.)*—

Riv. I fear, Madam, I have by some means occasioned an alarm, which—

Enter SLIP-SLOP *(with drops.)*

Lady Clara. Quick! quick! or I expire. *(after taking a smelling-bottle.)*—Slip-Slop, tell the man, I beg his pardon, but I've always had a particular aversion to black scratches.

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* This was related to me as an anecdote.

Slip. (to Rivers)—Sir, my Lady hopes you'll accuse her, but a black scratch always was her particular diversion.

Riv. I'm sorry to have offended, but 'tis the lot of misfortune to offend in every thing!

Mod. I—I think, Mr. Rivers, I've heard my father speak of you, but as to what he said, I really don't remember a syllable.

Riv. I fear, if you did it could not prejudice you in my favor; yet as my conduct was only imprudent, never dishonorable, your father's friendship was mine to the last.

Mod. Very possible; I don't dispute it.

Riv. Were he alive, I should not want a friend! Let me, however, rejoice in his son's affluence. Your numerous retinue, your splendid mansion, prove that you've the ability to serve me, and your inclination I cannot doubt.

Mod. Why really—Hem!—Appearances are frequently deceitful and—and to say the truth—Pray, what may your plans be?

Riv. They rest on you—As all hopes of independence are finally destroyed, I must rely on your good offices to obtain for me some small place, and being so near a relation, I think, I have some claim to your exertions.

Mod. Claim—Oh! yes—certainly a claim—but really places are so difficult to obtain.—

Lady Clara. Difficult! I tried the other day without success to get my footman in the custom-house; so nothing can be done for you in that way.

Mod. However, Sir, I'll look about me, and if any thing occurs will let you know. Good morning.

Riv. In the mean time may I without offence mention to you my distressed situation? The griping hand of poverty presses hard upon me: I have no other support, have no one to look to but yourself.—Oh! George, George, you once loved me! Often have I carried you in my arms, often has my hand supplied you with money when a boy, and in all your little distresses it was from my partiality that you sought assistance! Let these recollections, let the recollection of your excellent father plead for me, when I mention—that—that a trifling pecuniary aid will be of most essential service.

Mod. (*with emotion, aside to* Lady CLARA) I'll—I'll give him a ten pound note, and send him away.

Lady Clara. Ten pounds? Heavens! Modish! don't be so extravagant.

Mod. Your Ladyship is always œconomical, when charity is in the case!

Lady Clara. *(with a sneer.)* Oh! Sir, you're partial to me!

Mod. If I am, dam'me!—*(resuming his cold manner.)* I'm very sorry, Mr. Rivers, it's out of my power to assist you at present, but if I hear of any thing to suit you, I'll let you know. Good morning.

Riv. But Sir—

Mod. I'll move heaven and earth to serve you. Good morning.

Riv. But Sir, if you don't know where I live, how can you inform me of your success.

Mod. Oh! true! where shall I send?

Riv. *(hesitating)*—I am ashamed to name such a miserable—I —I lodge at the Three Blue Posts, in Little Britain

Lady Clara. Oh! Shocking! Is it possible that any body can live at the Three Blue Posts?

Mrs Slip. Oh! dear no, my Lady; it an't possible.

Riv. Before I go, Sir, let me ask whether your sister Emily is still living.

Lady Clara. Oh! yes, But she can't assist you, so it's useless applying to her. However, my porter can give you her direction.

Riv. Is she then in distress! I'll hasten to her, and though she may not give me relief for my wants, with her I may at least find sympathy for my woes, a sentiment which I have vainly sought for in the Palaces of the Great.—*(With stifled anger)* Good morning, Sir.

Mod. Your servant.

Riv. *(aside.)* So fades my hope! On how sandy a foundation do they build, who place their reliance on the friendship of affluence! [*Exit.*

Lady Clara. So, he's gone at last.

Mrs. Slip. And truly I'm glad of it! No wonder your La'ship was so flusterated at seeing him; for when I first saw his odorous black scratch, I protest it threw me into such a constellation, that I thought I should have perspired upon the spot!

Lady Clara. Poor Slip-slop! Order the carriage to the door.
[*Exit.* Slip-slop.

Mod. Before you go, Madam, I must say—

Lady Clara. My dear Mr. Modish, say not another word on the subject, since on one point I am decided; that whenever we are of different opinions, you must be wrong, and I must be right. Good morning. [*Exit.*

Mod. I've gained much by this conference! Bachelors! Bachelors! Tye yourself up in the noose of hemp, rather than the noose of matrimony. The pain of the former is never felt after a few minutes; but the knot of the latter grows tighter every hour during years, and is at last only loosened by death or infamy. [*Exit.*

ACT II.

ZORAYDA'S *Apartment—She is discovered folding a Letter.*

ZORAYDA.

'Tis done! Yes Beauchamp, we part, and for ever! Yes, tell you so myself—No, no! I cannot! That painful task, I trust, this letter will, induce Mrs. Ormand to undertake. What? Beauchamp's mistress? The mistress of a *married* man? Break, fond heart, break, but support such shame no longer! Hark!—he comes!—*(concealing the letter.)*—

Enter BEAUCHAMP.

Beau. Zorayda!—How, in tears my love!

Zor. (assuming gaiety)—Heed them not!—A mere trifle—My grief is already forgotten.

Beau. Indeed? Had your grief then so slight a cause.

Zor. Ah! while remorse and shame dwell here, can my cause for grief ever be slight!

Beau. Yet methinks in public your manner—

Zor. Is gay, is forced, is agonizing! Loth am I that the world should see that I suffer, since 'twas from you my sufferings sprung;

but believe me, Beauchamp, the smiles which play on my cheek in public are to my heart as moon-beams falling on some rock of ice; they shine, but warm not!

Beau. Dearest Zorayda!—

Zor. Edward! Edward! Oh! where is my father? perhaps now stretched on the bed of sickness, calling on Zorayda for those offices which a daughter alone can perform; and woe is me! calling in vain! Perhaps—perhaps ere this cold in a foreign grave, where his heart has forgot at my name to burn with anger, or to glow with love, where Death has long since forbidden his lips to call on me, or curse me! Yet if he still *should* live—too surely, wretched Zorayda, he lives no longer for thee.

Beau. Zorayda, would you drive me mad?

Zor. And still no letters from India? Still no word from my father, or kind, or cruel? Oh that I could but know he still exists! that I could but once more see the characters of his hand; that I could but for one moment hear his voice, though in the next I again heard it curse me!

Beau. Nay, be comforted! A person just arrived from India, I trust, can give me some tidings of Mr. Mortimer, and having discharged my errand here, I hasten to him. You mentioned some trinkets which you wished to purchase; these notes will answer their price. And now, my love, farewell for the present: when next we meet, I hope to bring good tidings.

Zor. Heaven grant it! but to whom go you?

Beau. To a poor relation of Modish's, who applied to him for relief.

Zor. And he departed?—

Beau. Unrelieved.

Zor. Alas! Yet perhaps he was undeserving?

Beau. That I know not; but trust me, Zorayda, I love not those, who weigh too nicely the transgressions of a *sufferer*: to punish human errors is the province of Heaven; to relieve human wants is the duty of man!

Zor. True, true, dear Edward! and therefore cannot you—

Beau. You know, my means are circumscribed; what cash I could have spared, was already appropriated to your use.

Zor. To mine?—these notes?—And whither is he now gone?

Beau. To Mrs. Ormond's, whose noble heart would willingly relieve him, but whose means—

Zor. And if she cannot—what must he do?

Beau. Starve, Zorayda!

Zor. He shall not!—no, no, he shall not! Follow him! These notes—take them, take them all: haste to him with them: oh! haste, ere it be too late! Nay, oppose me not, dear Edward; in this I must not be opposed.

Beau. Oppose you, Zorayda? be my own heart hardened, when I defeat the generosity of yours! I haste with your present to Mrs. Ormond, and at the same time I trust I shall obtain some tidings of Mr. Mortimer.

Zor. To Mrs. Ormond? Stay! I will inclose the notes in this letter—*(sealing it)*—Give it her; it says—

Beau. What, my love?

Zor.—*(after a pause)*—What *I* cannot!—Leave me! Nay delay not! Leave me, I conjure you!

Beau. I obey! [*Exit.*

Zor. I cannot doubt that letter's effect: Mrs. Ormond will read my sad story with compassion, and stretch forth her hand to save from destruction a poor creature, whose guilt began in ignorance, whose knowledge of that guilt, but for her, must end in despair! She will convince Beauchamp, that 'tis necessary we should part: then will I hasten back to India, hasten to my dear, my cruel father: will throw me on his bosom, will cling round his knees, will clasp his hand till it dashes me on the ground, and then, if his feet trample me, will bathe them with my tears, kiss them and die! [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—Mrs. ORMOND'S.—*The Breakfrst Table is set.*

Enter Mrs. ORMOND, *followed by* ANNE.

Mrs. Orm. Nay, Anne, it must be so; I must part with him.

Anne. Part with Frank? how will you manage that, Madam? Why, you'll never persuade him to go.

Mrs. Orm. But he must; I can no longer afford to keep him.

Anne. For that very reason, he'll stay, Madam. Oh! Frank will never go, I'm certain.

Mrs. Orm. Well, well, send him hither—[*Exit* Anne. Mrs. Ormond *looking at a letter which she holds*]—"will call this morning—Edward Beauchamp."—I hope, then, my remonstrances have at length prevailed, and he sees his conduct to Zorayda in its proper light. Yet even then, how to persuade her to part from him—

Enter Frank, *places the Tea-urn on the Table, and is going.*

Mrs. Orm. Stay, Frank; I must speak with you.

Frank. I wait your orders, madam.

Mrs. Orm. I give them for the last time.

Frank. Madam!

Mrs. Orm. It grieves me to say it, my good fellow, but we must part.

Frank. Part, Madam!—Part!

Mrs. Orm. Even so; but be assured, Frank, I shall always feel grateful for your fidelity, and should my fortune ever change, you shall not be forgotten.—What is due to you?—(*taking out her purse.*)

Frank. And you really turn me away?

Mrs. Orm. Turn you away? No, but I'm constrained to dismiss you.

Frank. Dismiss me?—Very well!—Do it!—But I won't go!

Mrs. Orm. Nay, but Frank—

Frank. And you can be cruel enough to turn me away? In Mrs. Ormand's family have I lived forty years, man and boy, and now all of a sudden you turn me a-drift! Ah! I see a fair face may hide a hard heart!

Mrs. Orm. But hear me, my good fellow! my circumstances demand retrenchment, and unable longer either to maintain or pay you—

Frank. I don't want to be paid! I don't want to be maintained! I ask but to see you every morning, and be assured you are in health; I ask but to see my young master grow up the image of his father; carry him in my arms while he's a child,

and when he's a man to die in his presence! I ask but this, and you refuse me! Yet you cannot surely be so cruel; you could never really mean to drive me away—*(kneeling)*—Dear good lady, comfort me, say you did this but to try me, say you never really meant to part with your poor and faithful Frank!

Mrs. Orm. (affected.) Rise, rise, my good fellow!—Yes, you shall remain with me! Rather will I endure any inconvenience, than pain a heart so feeling!

Frank. Inconvenience? God bless you, madam, I shall rather relieve you than occasion any. I am yet strong and hearty; I can labor, can work my fingers to the bones in your service, and rather than you or yours should want wherewithal to eat, Lord forgive me if I wouldn't consent to your eating *me!* [*Exit.*

Mrs. Orm. Noble heart!—I have heard servants called the plagues of life; but never did I pass more delightful moments than while listening to the effusiens of this honest fellow's gratitude.

Re-enter FRANK, *followed by* Mr. RIVERS.

Frank. This way, Sir!—A gentleman to wait on you, madam. [*Exit.*

Riv. When I left England, Madam, you were so young that probably no trace remains in my cousin Emily's remembrance—

Mrs. Orm. Is it possible? Surely, Sir, I now speak to Mr. Rivers.

Riv. Even so; but if you recollect my story as well as my features, I fear you are not prejudiced in my favor: my juvenile follies—

Mrs. Orm. (eagerly.) Sir, my father loved you; his friends can never be judged harshly by me. But pray inform me, I fear your expedition to the East—

Riv. The East, my dear Lady, was sufficiently kind; but, on my return, a tempest swept in one moment away the gains of eighteen painful years.

Mrs. Orm. I feel for your disappointment;—but ere we proceed, may I not offer you some breakfast? I am rather an invalid, and *rose* late to-day.

Riv. Were it not an intrusion—

Mrs. Orm. Intrusion? Oh! my good Sir, to meet with one whom my father loved, and who loved my father, is to me a delight so exquisite, and which now, alas! I enjoy so rarely!—Nay, be seated; I must not be denied.

Riv. What a contrast! [*aside.*]—I fear you will think me impertinent, yet I must hazard one enquiry. How comes it that your situation differs from your brother's so strangely?

Mrs. Orm. Oh! at my first entrance into life, my establishment was not less splendid, but my husband's nature, generous and benevolent to excess, ultimately proved our ruin. He was compelled to part with his estate, and we retired to an humble retreat, where my beloved Ormand expired.

Riv. But still your jointure—

Mrs. Orm. Satisfied my husband's creditors, not till I felt it, could I believe, that so much pleasure could be purchased by a sacrifice so trifling.

Riv. (aside.)—An angel, by Jupiter!

Mrs. Orm. This avowel must excuse my not offering you that assistance, which I should afford you most willingly; but doubtless on applying to my brother—

Riv. I have applied.

Mrs. Orm. And the result was—

Riv. Coldness and scorn!

Mrs. Orm. Indeed? Oh George!—Well, well, we will not despond: In my poverty, I have still some friends, I trust, both able and willing to oblige me. To these will I recommend you, and till they succeed in serving you, take a lodging near mine; my table shall be always open to you; and as you may already have contracted some little debts, pray make use of this trifle to discharge them. If not sufficient, only say it, and the sum shall be increased.

Riv. Madam!—Cousin!—Emily!—Nay, now my heart must burst!

Mrs. Orm. Let not such a trifle!

Riv. Forgive me!—Dearest Emily, forgive me! Here—take it, take it, and Heaven make you as happy with it as you deserve to be—*(giving her a pocket-book.)*

Mrs. Orm. How?—Notes?—and to a large amount!—What can this mean?

Riv. It means, that I deserve to be hanged, drawn, and quartered, for giving one moment's uneasiness to such an heart. I am rich, Emily, rich—Yet I lye, for all that was mine is now yours.

Mrs. Orm. Amazement: Can this be real?

Riv. A few hours shall convince you of its truth, nor can you feel better pleased to be heiress of my riches, than I feel at finding an heiress who deserves them. But I must away and begin my preparations, for by six o'clock, you must be lodged in your own house, attended by your own servants, and ready to welcome me at your own table.

Mrs. Orm. But, dear, Sir, this great haste—

Riv. Oh! hang delay; what I do, I do at once, and so farewell for the present.—*(going.)*

Mrs. Orm. But at least take back these notes; their value—

Riv. Is trifling when compared with that of your present! *(kissing it.)* But never—no, while I have life never will I part with this note! I'll wear it next my heart as a talisman, for you gave it when you could full ill afford it, and gave it too from the noblest of motives, compassion for the distrest, and respect for the memory of a father! [*Exit.*

Mrs. Orm. This event so unexpected, so sudden—Now then I can look forward once more without anxiety.—Oh! from what a weight is my bosom relieved!—William—my dear, my darling William—Thy prospects are bright again!—While she clasps thee to her bosom, thy mother shall tremble no more for thy future fate; and want shall no longer compel her to restrain the openness of thy liberal hand, or blame the benevolence of thy little feeling heart. My faithful servants too—How! Lord Listless?

Enter Lord LISTLESS.

Lord List. Even he. But you seem surprised at my visit: when you know its purport, I think, my dear Mrs. Ormond, you'll not be sorry to see me.

Mrs. Orm. (coldly.) Lady Clara, I suppose—

Lord List. No, Clara's quite out of the question; the thought's entirely my own, I'll assure you; but don't let your joy overpower you.

Mrs. Orm. My joy!

Lord List. Yes; for you must know, my dear creature, I'm in love with you.

Mrs. Orm. You, my Lord? You?

Lord List. To distraction, 'pon my soul! *(carelessly.)*

Mrs. Orm. I can scarcely credit my hearing.

Lord List. And here I am for the express purpose of making you proposals.

Mrs. Orm. I protest I'm so surprised—

Lord List. I've ordered my lawyer to draw up a handsome settlement; and as these apartments are but *La, La,* you had better remove to my house immediately.—La Fleur, my carriage!—Will you come?

Mrs. Orm. The coxcomb! *(aside.)* My Lord, I must be candid with you. Considering our situations, I know the world will blame me for not accepting your proposals; but could I so easily forget Mr. Ormond's loss, I must frankly own that your Lordship is by no means the man whom I think likely to make me happy in a second marriage.

Lord List. Marriage! my dear creature, who said a word on the subject? Nothing could be farther from my thoughts, for I think marriage a great bore; Don't you?—Now, what I meant was that sort of amicable arrangement, which, when we grow tired of each other, (as I doubt not we soon shall) may leave both at liberty to pursue our separate inclinations. Thus stands the case; You are poor, I am rich; you are handsome, so am I. Despise then the opinions of prudes and synics, and sharing a splendid establishment with love and me—*(yawning.)*

Mrs. Orm. Beyond a doubt must be perfectly enchanting!—*(aside)* Insolent coxcomb! Yet he's so absurd that anger here would be ridiculous.

Lord List. Yes, I thought you'd like the proposal. Nay, I should have flown to you with it upon the wings of love a month ago, if something or other hadn't continually driven it out of my head; and if my valet hadn't put me in mind of it this morn-

ing, 'pon my soul I believe I shouldn't have remembered it at all.

Mrs. Orm. It were better, my Lord, that you never had, for I cannot hold your insolent offers in greater contempt than I do their proposer. After this declaration you must be convinced that your presence here cannot be acceptable. *(Going.)*

Lord List. Nonsense! Come, come, don't be silly, child!—My carriage is at the door, and I must positively take you away with me.

Mrs. Orm. Unhand me, my Lord!

Lord List. Ten thousand pardons! I forgot; you are a prude, and a little gentle force is necessary to quiet your scruples.

Mrs. Orm. My Lord!——I beg——I entreat you——

Lord List. Now, why the devil give me all this trouble? Nay, some you must, 'pon my soul!

Mrs. Orm. Nay then—Frank!—Frank, I say!—Help! help!

Enter BEAUCHAMP.

Beau. (seizing Lord Listless, and disengaging Mrs. Ormand, who sinks into a chair.) Rascal! how dare you—Hey, the devil? Lord Listless!—And what brings your Lordship here?

Lord List. Poh, Beauchamp! 'tis a mere joke. Mrs. Ormand was alarmed without reason, and thought proper—

Beau. Without reason? I doubt it not; I believe no one has much to fear from your Lordship.

Lord List. I don't understand that sneer, but the immediate enforcement of your bond shall convince you that you, Sir, at least have something to fear from me. This will be merely a proper mode of punishing your present conduct, which I cannot but consider as ungrateful in the extreme; and 'pon my soul I should be in a confounded passion, if being angry were not too great an exertion for a man of fashion. [*Exit.*

Beau. Mean coxcomb! Mrs. Ormand, I fear your agitation—

Mrs. Orm. Oh! a fit of tears has relieved me; but how can I sufficiently thank you for your interference.

Beau. By accepting without scruple this from Zorayda *(gives a packet.)*

Mrs. Orm. And its contents are—

Beau. Hearing that Mr. Rivers meant to apply to you for assistance, and fearing lest your ability to relieve him should not square with your inclination, she readily sacrificed some jewels, which she had long been anxious to possess, and appropriated the money to the alleviation of his distresses.

Mrs. Orm. Noble girl! And while such is *her* conduct, how, Colonel Beauchamp, how can you justify your own, either to her or to yourself?

Beau. Justify it, I cannot. Yet surely circumstances may in some measure extenuate its impropriety. The woman's cha- character, who, for my sins, calls me her husband—

Mrs. Orm. That woman, be she what she may, is still your wife, Colonel Beauchamp, nor are her faults any apology for yours. I may pity you for being united to such a woman; but while she exists, I must blame your attachment to any other.

Beau. Well then, my fair moralist, shew that pity by counselling my future conduct. What should I do?

Mrs. Orm. Can you ask me? Restore Zorayda to virtue and to her father.

Beau. On one condition you shall be obeyed. A report, which seems well authenticated, has reached me, that many months are past since my wife expired at Turin. For that place I mean instantly to set out, anxious to ascertain the fact, which, if true, leaves me at liberty to repair my injuries to Zorayda; and if false—

Mrs. Orm. You will then be guided by me?

Beau. There is my hand; on my honor, I will.

Mrs. Orm. I accept then your conditions. When mean you to set out for Turin?

Beau. I am impatient to be gone; yet how to tell Zorayda that I must leave her—

Mrs. Orm. Be that my care.

Beau. Dear Mrs. Ormond, would you but undertake that painful task, would you explain to her the object of my journey to Turin, and, should it prove unsuccessful, strive to reconcile her to the cruel alternative—

Mrs. Orm. All this shall be done, though not exactly by me; situated as I am with Lady Clara, I cannot go myself to her house

uninvited; but I think Mr. Rivers may without impropriety, under the pretext of returning to her this now unnecessary present.

Beau. Unnecessary! Have his wants then been already relieved?

Mrs. Orm. They heeded no relief; Rivers is wealthy, and the object of his visit to Lady Clara's this morning was to make an experiment on her heart, not of her purse. Zorayda's gift, therefore, being now superfluous, I will persuade Rivers to return it to her himself; and while expressing his gratitude for her well-intended benevolence, he may take an opportunity of convincing her that your absence is necessary, that Lady Clara's is by no means a proper abode for her, and he shall press her, 'till the result of your enquiries shall have determined her future conduct, to accept an asylum in my house.

Beau. And will you, Mrs. Ormond, will you hazard your reputation, and subject yourself to the world's censure, by affording protection to an unfortunate, whose errors—

Mrs. Orm. Hush! hush! No more of this. You accept then my proposals?

Beau. With transport! But by heaven you are an angel!—Oh, Mrs. Ormond! did all your sex think like you—would chastity stretch forth her hand to assist the penitent, not raise it to plunge her deeper—many a poor victim of imprudence now struggling with the billows might easily regain the shore!—But when some unhappy girl has made the first false step, branded with shame, abandoned by her former friends, courted by vice, and shunned by virtue, no wonder that she flies from remorse to the arms of luxury, and purchases a momentary oblivion of her sorrows by a repetiton of the fault which caused them.

[*Exeunt severally.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*An apartment elegantly furnished.*

MRS. ORMAND *and* RIVERS *are seated near a Table, on which is Desert, &c.*

RIVERS.

WELL, well, your commission is a delicate one, and I doubt much my executing it to your satisfaction; but however I'll do my best. Beauchamp, you say, is the villian's name who—

Mrs. Orm. It is, but guilty as he is in the present instance, justice compels me to say, that by no other act has he ever merited the name of villain.

Riv. By my soul, this one is quite sufficient! The married seducer of an unsuspecting girl, the selfish betrayer of a father confidence! Oh! he's qualified to take the degree of villain in any college of vice throughout the universe!

Mrs. Orm. Thus severe upon Beauchamp, how can Miss Mandeville's errors hope from you that indulgence—

Riv. Surely the case is widely different; besides, her generosity has interested me sincerely in her behalf. This you say is the packet which I am to return to her?—Mandeville?—Mandeville?—I don't recollect any person of that name in India; but no matter; whoever her father may be, if he really loves his daughter, heartily shall I rejoice to relieve the poor man from suffering, what I once felt so keenly myself.

Mrs. Orm. Yourself?

Riv. Emily, it was my misfortune to have a daughter on whom my soul doated. Her mother died while my child was yet an infant, and my child was the image of that mother, was the delight of my eye, was the comfort of my heart, was the solitary blessing of my existence; and while that one blessing was mine, I thought I possessed every other! This daughter, this very idolized daughter, sacrificed to passion *her* honor and *my* love, abandoned me for a villain, and her father became childless!

Mrs. Orm. Is she then dead?

Riv. To me for ever! She fled from India, doubtless with the perfidious Dorimant; and what has since become of her, I know not. But be she where she may, the ungrateful is no more my daughter.

Mrs. Orm. Yet were she now stretched in penitence at your feet—

Riv. Stretched in her coffin I might forgive her, else never!

Mrs. Orm. Oh! Mr. Rivers—

Riv. Nay, speak of her no more. I have sworn never to pardon her; that oath will I keep religiously, and seek that happiness, my dear cousin, in *your* family, which the ungrateful fugitive has banished for ever from my own! [*Exit.*

Mrs. Orm. Either Mr. Rivers deceives himself, or the difference must be strange between a father's and a mother's feelings! Yes, my loved William, should'st *thou* prove unworthy my regard, I think my heart would break with grief; but till it *did* break, never, oh! surely never, would it feel one spark of less affection for thee! [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*A Room at Lady Clara's.—Another is seen through folding-doors.*

Enter Lord LISTLESS *and* MODISH.

Lord List. A peer and a man of fashion lend money? Mad! Positively mad, dear Modish, or such an idea could never have entered your head!

Mod. Is it so strange, then, to expect assistance [redacted] other?

Lord. List. No, but uncommonly strange to expect money from a man of fashion.

Mod. Absurd, when the largeness of your income—

Lord. List. Is absolutely necessary for the largeness of my expenditure. 'Pon my soul, my dear fellow, I could almost imagine, that you have quite forgotten how absolutely necessary it is for a man in my situation to keep up a certain style; to have horses he never rides, houses he never inhabits, and mistresses he scarcely knows by sight. In short, these unnecessary necessities

are so innumerable, that I'm myself much straitened in my circumstances, and mean to insist immediately upon the payment of Beauchamp's bond.

Mod. How, Lord Listless! That bond, which it is well known your father never intended to—But this is foreign to the subject. Will you oblige me with the sum I mentioned?

Lord List. I can't, 'pon my soul!

Mod. Say rather, you *won't*; I shall be better pleased.

Lord List. Shall you?—Then I won't 'pon my soul!

Mod. I've done. If you can justify to yourself this conduct towards so near a relation as Lady Clara, and a man whom you called your friend—

Lord List. Friends? Relations? Ridiculous! My dear Modish, you surely forget that I'm a citizen of the world, an universal philanthropist. The poor are *my* relations, the unfortunate are *my* friends: and as to my natural friends and relations, I don't care that for them all put together, 'pon my soul!—*(snapping his fingers.)* [*Exit.*

Mod. Contemptible!—Yet how dare I arraign his conduct, when I remember how little did compassion sway my own this morning to poor Rivers!

Enter JOHN.

John. Here's a sad job, Sir! The porter has let in the old usurer.

Mod. [redacted]? The usurer? what Squeez'em?

John. [redacted]ame, Sir.

Mod. The devil?—Yet I dare not refuse to see him.—show him up.—[*Exit John.*]—No doubt he comes for money, but I must beat him off as civilly as I can.

JOHN *introduces* SQUEEZ'EM.

Mod. Good God, is it you, my dear Mr. Squeez'em? I'm charmed beyond measure to see you! why you look charmingly, charmingly I protest!

Squeez. You're mighty good to say so, Sir. I made bold to call.—

Mod. I'm extreemly glad you did, for I was just wondering why I hadn't seen you for so long; and why don't you call oftener? I'm happy at all times to see my best friend, Mr. Squeez'em.

Squeez. I am much flattered by your kindness, Sir—There is a—

Mod. I beg you'll be seated. John, a chair for Mr. Squeez'em.

Squeez. It's quite unnecessary, for I only—

Mod. I must insist upon it. My good friend, sit yourself down, I entreat you. *(They sit.)* And now tell me, how are your children? All well, I hope! No measles? No hooping-cough? No—

Squeez. None, Sir, none, I thank you; but there is a little—

Mod. A little one coming is there? I beg I may stand godfather.

Squeez. Lord, Sir, you mistake; I'd only—

Mod. Why, isn't dear Mrs. Squeez'em likely to—

Squeez. Dear Mrs. Squeez'em has nothing at all to do with what I'm come about. To be plain with you, Mr. Modish, there is a little affair, which—

Mod. A little affair? Oh! you sly rogue! What, which must be a secret between you and me? Well, well, I promise you, Mrs. Squeez'em sha'nt hear a word of it. And so the little girl is pretty, is she?

Squeez. Lord, Sir, I can't get you to hear me out; and I've walked here all the way from St. Mary Axe on purpose to—

Mod. Walked here? What, all that way? [illegible] pray take some refreshment, for I am sure you must be fatigued. Here John, tea, coffee—or perhaps you'd prefer a glass of wine? only say what you like, and—

Squeez. Dear Sir, there's nothing I should like so much at present as to have you listen to what I want to say.

Mod. Surely, surely; you won't take any refreshment then?

Squeez. None, I thank you, Sir; I'm in a hurry to return home, and only wish to ask—

Mod. In a hurry to return home? Then for Heaven's sake don't let me detain you.—Here John, light Mr. Squeez'em down stairs.

Squeez. Sir, I only want to—

Mod. To get home, I know it. Good night.

Squeez. I should be glad to—

Mod. To go; pray suit your convenience, but I'm greatly obliged to you for this call, Chatting away an hour with a friend like you is so amusing!—Open the door, John.

Squeez. If you'd only be so good as to pay—

Mod. My respects to Mrs. Squeez'em; I shall take the first opportunity, and bring Lady Clara with me, till then, adieu, my dear Mr. Squeez'em; consider me as your fast friend, and be assured, that I shall always be delighted to serve you to the utmost extent of my ability.

[*Exeunt* Squeez'em *and* John.*

Mod. So! He's gone, and now I can breathe again; but I must rejoin my company, lest the cause of my absence should be suspected. With a mind thus ill at ease how tormenting it is to assume the appearance of content, and mingle with the irksome gaiety of the happy and unthinking. [*Exit.*

Enter Miss CHATTERALL *and* SLIP-SLOP.

Miss Chat. Let Lady Clara know that I'm here, and have something to say to her of importance. [*Exit* Slip-slop.

Enter WALSINGHAM.

Miss Chat. Oh! Lord, Mr. Walsingham!—

Wal. Oh! Lord, Miss Chatterall!—

Miss Chat. I've got such a story to tell you!—

Wal. "[illegible]ory to tell?"—I dare say you have.

Miss Chat. Do you know Miss Bloomly?

Wal. Only by character.

Miss Chat. Then you know the worst of her, for her character's monstrous shocking, that's the truth on't. But would you believe it, she's crooked! How comical, an't it?

Wal. Crooked? Imposible!

Miss Chat. Oh! but I assure you it's true, for her most intimate friend told me so just now with her own mouth.

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* This scene was suggested by that of *Monsieur Dimanche* in *Moliére's* "*Festin de Pierre.*"

Wal. Her friend!—A pretty sort of a friend, by my honor! Before I'd have such friends—

Miss Chat. Nay but, Mr. Walsingham, there was no harm in telling it to *me*, for she knew very well it would go no further.

Wal. Did she? Then I pronounce her a most learned Lady, for she knows what no other person in London does, man, woman or child.

Miss Chat. Well, but now don't repeat this story I beg, for nobody else knows it; and I only mean to tell it to Lady Clara, and a few particular friends, under a profound promise of secrecy.

Wal. There you are quite right, for whenever you wish a malicious report to circulate, you should always relate it as an inviolable secret.—People of fashion hear so much scandal daily, that one's own particular lye is frequently huddled into the crowd, and perhaps totally forgotten; but tell a fine lady a scandalous anecdote under promise of secrecy, and I'll be bound she pops it out in five minutes after.

Miss Chat. I declare now, he doesn't believe a word of it, and that's monstrous provoking! However, I hope it will still serve to break off Miss Bloomly's marriage with young Flash. Well I protest I can't conceive how it is that every body contrives to get married except myself! I'm sure I do all in my power; grudge no expence in fans, feathers, cold cream, pearl powder, and bloom of oriental lilies; and it was but last week that I paid the Lord knows-what for a new pair of the very best arched eye-brows!—Yet all won't do, and I'm sure it's—it's *curst* provoking, so it is!

Enter ZORAYDA.

Miss Chat. Oh! Miss Mandeville, do you know—

Zor. Alas! Yes, Miss Chatterall, I know it but too well!

Miss Chat. Do you! Oh! Gemini! who could have told you?

Zor. The town talks of nothing else: at first indeed I wouldn't believe the story; but the redness of your eyes proves it to be but two well founded.

Miss Chat. My eyes?—Dear, what can you mean?

Zor. I'm sure I pity you sincerely, but how *could* you be so imprudent? How could you think of going in your own carriage to the place where your little boys are nursed?

Miss Chat. My little boys?

Zor. Nay, it's too late to pretend ignorance; I know the story but too well!

Miss Chat. Do you? Then pray let me know it too; for let me die if this isn't the first word I ever heard of it.

Zor. Nay, this is carrying the jest too far, since every body knows you were married in St. Martin's Church to a Serjeant of the Guards, of the name of Brazen, on the seventeenth of last June, at seven and thirty minutes past eleven, odd seconds; and that you have at this moment two fine little boys at nurse with Mrs. Mum, No. 9, Paradise Row, three doors from the Red Lamps and Green Railing. Why, dear me, every body knows it as well as I do!

Miss Chat. Oh! Mercy! what, *I* marry a Serjeant in the Guards! *I* have fine little boys! *I* visit a vulgar Mrs. Mum! Oh! horrid! Oh! monstrous!

Zor. Really, Mrs. Brazen—

Miss Chat. Don't call me Mrs. Brazen! I won't be called Mrs. Brazen!

Zor. Nay, 'tis a disagreeable situation, I own, and I declare I pity you extremely.

Miss Chat. Don't pity me, Miss! I won't bear to be pitied! There's not a syllable of truth in the story, and I'm surprised you could believe such a thing.

Zor. Oh! But I had it from your friend Mrs. Blab-all, and she, you know,—"has talked scandal to you for this year and a half past, and never told you the least bit of a lye in all that time!"—

Miss Chat. Mrs. Blab-all? A malicious creature! But I always thought her a very bad woman! I'll go this moment and tell her—But, even if this story *were* true, I don't understand, Miss, why you should talk to me about it of all people in the world!

Zor. Dear! I thought talking over the subject would console you! Did not you go this morning to Lady Cogwell, on purpose to talk over the story of her cheating?

Miss Chat. Yes, but I did *that* merely to teaze her.

Zor. Did you? Then I vow and protest, that's the very reason why *I* did *this.*

Miss Chat. Indeed? Then let me tell you, Miss—

Zor. Come, Miss Chatterall, even make yourself easy. After all, this story of the footman is simply an experiment of mine, intended to ascertain how you would bear being the heroine of such an anecdote, as I have frequently heard you relate of others; and I trust it will convince you, that murdering characters is not an amusement quite so harmless as you and your acquaintance seem to think it.

Miss Chat. Very well, Miss! Very well! But since you think proper to take such liberties with—

Zor. Nay, nay, either be calm, or excuse my leaving you, since if the storm must rage, I prefer infinitely hearing it at a distance.

BALLAD.—*(Cease, rude Boreas.)*

STILL this tempest wildly raging
List, fair lady, list to me;
Let my prayers your wrath assuaging,
Calm your bosom's stormy sea;
Anger now would sure be silly,
Nothing should your peace destroy;
While you think on little Billy,
Serjeant Brazen's own sweet boy!

[*Exit.*

Miss Chat. A saucy chit! I protest she has so flurried me, that I dare say just now I look as hideous as herself! And here's somebody coming too!—I'll step into the next room, and settle myself before the glass. [*Retires.*

Enter JOHN *followed by* RIVERS.

Riv. Say to Miss Mandeville that a gentleman has a message to her from Mrs. Ormand.—*Exit John.*]—I feel not a little embarrassed at entering upon a business so delicate. How the Deuce shall I open the conversation?—Nay, there's no time for reflection, for here comes the lady.

Miss Chat. (advancing, and looking at him through her glass.) —Um! A stranger!—And really a personable man.—I'll accost him.—If you wish, Sir, to see Lady Clara—

Riv. No, Madam; my business, is with you. My name is Rivers, and I come here authorized by Colonel Beauchamp to converse with you on a very delicate subject.—*(aside.)*—Well, hang me if I see an atom of the youth and beauty which Mrs. Ormand praised so highly!

Miss Chat. By Beauchamp did you say, Sir? By Colonel Beauchamp?

Riv. You seem surprised, Madam; but suffer me to say, that Beauchamp's attachment to you—

Miss Chat. Attachment to me? I'm sure, if he ever had any, he kept it a profound secret.

Riv. Ah! Madam, you flatter yourself! In spite of his precautions, that secret is now so well known, that things can no longer remain as they are, and some change in your situation ought to take place as soon as possible. I trust, Madam, you are of my opinion.

Miss Chat. Why really, Sir—to say the truth—I can't deny that I *am* rather of your way of thinking. But as Colonel Beauchamp has a wife—

Riv. That wife, he has great reason to believe exists no longer.

Miss Chat. (looking pleased.)—Indeed?—dear Sir, but that quite alters the case, you know!

Riv. It does, and should this event be ascertained, his hand will immediately be offered, where his heart has long been given. —*(aside)*—Well, there certainly is no accounting for tastes.

Miss Chat. Lord, Sir! dear, Sir!—*(aside)*—Thank Heaven then I *shall* be married after all!

Riv. But should Mrs. Beauchamp still be living—

Miss Chat. (sighing)—Then, Sir, there's an end of the whole business!

Riv. True, Madam, and I rejoice that you feel the necessity: It relieves me from the most embarrassing part of my commission, and emboldens me to say, without further ceremony, that in case of your not marrying Beauchamp, all your friends think it right that you should set off immediately for India.

Miss Chat. For India!—Lord, Sir, What should I do there? Why must I needs be packed off to India, because I can't marry Colonel Beauchamp?

Riv. My dear Madam, 'tis absolutely necessary, and till you set sail, Mrs. Ormond requests you to accept an assylum in her house. At first indeed she had some scruples at engaging in an affair so delicate; but as she is confident that Colonel Beauchamp is the only person who has ever been particular to you—

Miss Chat. *(tossing her head.)*—Indeed, Sir? Upon my word then she's very much mistaken. A great many people have been much more particular than Colonel Beauchamp, I can assure her.

Riv. How! a great many?

Miss Chat. Yes, Sir, fifty at least.

Riv. Zounds! Madam, fifty?

Miss Chat. Bless me, Sir, what is there so strange in that? Why if I don't marry for a year, I dare say there'll be fifty more.

Riv. The devil there will!—Then, Madam, your going to India—

Miss Chat. I'd as soon go to the moon, Sir!—What, leave London, dear London, and the gay world, the dear gay world! The very thought on't is more odious and execrable, and all that Sir, an't it?

Riv. But, madam, madam, should your marriage not take place, can you think it proper that Beauchamp's attachment to you should last?

Miss Chat. No, to be sure I don't. In that case he'll go *his* way, I mine, till either he has got rid of his matrimonial clog, or I found some other lover as much to my liking. That's all, Sir.

Riv. Fire and furies! what depravity! *(aside:)* Your grief then for his loss wouldn't prevent—

Miss Chat. Lord, no, Sir! why should it? The man is certainly well enough for a man; but if he breaks with me, I don't despair of finding as good to supply his place.

Riv. By heaven this is too much!—Hear me, lost unhappy creature!

Miss Chat. Oh! Lord bless me, what's the matter?

Riv. Are you then indeed so dead to shame—But I abandon you to the sorrows which cannot fail to arise from principles so depraved!

Miss Chat. How? What?—Sir, how do you dare—

Riv. Yet I thank you for not preserving the mask before me. I can now open Mrs. Ormand's eyes, and shall insist upon her taking no further notice of a woman, who has not only broken down the pale of virtue, but who glories in the breach! Oh! fye upon you?

Miss Chat. I?—I?—Oh! monstrous!—*(ringing the bell violently.)* Who waits there?—Lady Clara?—Mr. Modish! where are you, Mr, Modish? Oh I shall burst with rage!—*(throwing herself into a chair.)*

Enter LADY CLARA.

Lady Clara. For heaven's sake, why is all this noise?

Miss Chat. (sobbing.) Oh! Lady Clara, I've been so shocked and insulted by that odious man! He has said such things! How quizzical, an't it?

Lady Clara. Mr. Rivers here again!

Riv. Even *He*; but I shall intrude upon your Ladyship no longer than while I return this packet to Miss Mandeville, and with it my thanks: It grieves me that I cannot praise her other qualities as highly as her generosity.

Miss Chat. Miss Mandeville? Nay then I'll see— [*opening the packet.*]

Lady Clara. I'm amazed at you, Mr. Rivers! what you can mean by this conduct—

Riv. A time may come, when your Ladyship may not be perfectly satisfied with your own; but however great may then be your contrition, remember, that I now bid you an eternal farewell!—*(going, he meets Beauchamp, and starts back.)*—Dorimant, by Heaven!

Beau. Ha! Mortimer here!

Riv. (seizing him.) Where is my child? What place conceals her? Answer, or I spurn you at my foot!

Lady Clara. Bless me, Beauchamp, what means—

Riv. Beauchamp!—Ha! then my poor girl is already abandoned, for you coquette! But this is no place for—You shall hear from me soon, Sir;—and till he does hear from me, sit thou heavy on his soul, curse of a distracted father! [*Exit.*

Lady Clara. Why, what can the fellow—

Beau. Oh! Lady Clara, I shall go mad! 'Tis Mortimer, 'tis the rich East Indian, who—

Lady Clara. Lord, no! That is Rivers, our poor relation, who—

Beau. Oh! no, no, no! I know him but too well! But why do I linger here? I'll follow him, and either perish by his hand, or obtain from him Zorayda's pardon! [*Exit.*

Lady Clara. Mortimer? I protest, I'm frightened out of my senses!

Miss Chat. (reading.)—"Unfortunate attachment"—"ignorance of the world"—Beauchamp"—"my father"—"fled from India.—So! the whole story of Miss Mandeville's seduction, and consequent embarrassments, in her own hand! I think I shall now be even with her, for I'll to the printer's with this letter immediately.

Enter MODISH.

Mod. Whither now, Miss Chatterall?

Miss Chat. Oh! I can't stop a moment. Look, Sir, look; a letter of Miss Mandeville's, and to morrow's newspaper shall serve it up at every fashionable breakfast-table in town, where, "Philanthropus" shall cry out shame upon her! "an indignant observer" pull her to pieces without mercy, and, while one paper torments her with "gentle hints," another shall pester her to death with "friendly remonstrances."—Your servant, Sir. [*Exit.*

Mod. A letter of Zorayda's! What can the spiteful creature mean?—Ha! Lady Clara, you seem agitated?

Lady Clara. Something has happened which—But I'll know the truth of it this moment.

Enter SLIP-SLOP.

Lady Clara. Slip-slop, let one of Mrs. Ormond's servants be sent for instantly.

Slip. Frank is below, my Lady; but, begging your pardon, I think he's a little intoxticated with liquor.

Lady Clara. No matter, send him hither. [*Exit* SLIP-SLOP.

Mod. But what can possibly—

Lady Clara. You shall know all presently.—Oh! here he comes.

Frank. (*running in, and Sir.-Sir.*) Huzza! the East Indian for ever. Huzza!

Mrs. Sir. Hush, man, Frank! None of these exhibitions! Learn your—

Lady Clara. Come nearer, Frank. Pray does your Lady know Mr. Mordaunt?

Frank. Know him! Aye, that she does. Heaven bless him! By your ladyship. I suppose by this time your ladyship knows him too! Why, he did more for me, &c. (that's the truth on't.

Lady Clara. The fellow's drunk.

Frank. No, ma'am, Mrs. Sir.-Sir's not drunk; that's not in. But upon my soul, ma'am, I can't tell you the story properly if you keep turning round and round in that comical manner.

Mid. Took her in, say you?

Frank. Yes, and your honor too, saving your presence. Why he's the great rich moonraking nabob, Mortimer! He's the East Indian! Huzza! the East Indian for—

Sir. (*putting her hand before his mouth.*) Hush! hush, fellow!

Mid. How, Mortimer!

Lady Clara. And—and is he so very rich?

Frank. Oh! not so very rich. His servant, indeed, Mr. Yambo-Zingo, assured me he had brought over whole bushels of gold, and pecks of blue pearl. But, for all his boasting, I don't believe he's worth above two or three millions at most.

Lady Clara. Millions! Oh mercy!

Mid. Confusion!

Frank. But honest Frank, says he, all I have is your Lady's. Oh! that made me mortal happy!—And then, says he, honest Frank, Lady Clara shan't have a farthing on't. Oh! that made me a mortal deal happier!—Huzza! huzza! The East Indian for ever! Huzza! [*Exit.*

Mid. See, Madam, see what your insensibility has thrown away.

Lady Clara. My insensibility, Sir! Oh monstrous! I whose nerves are so delicate, whose sentiments are so refined, that——

Mod. Madam, madam, the fault is your's. I pitied Rivers's distress, and should have relieved it had not you—

Lady Clara. Lord, Sir, what would you have had me do? I'm sure I made the best guess I could, and would have given the man any thing in the world had I only known that he wanted nothing.

Mod. Madam, madam, you have committed the fault—you must repair it. Go this moment to my sister's, entreat her to intercede for us with Mr. Rivers, and either bring home *his* pardon or never hope for mine. [*Exit.*

Lady Clara. Yes, I must go. Slip-slop, my cloak!—Such a princely fortune lost!—I remember now to have heard of Mortimer's immense wealth; and perhaps at the very moment he pleaded for half a crown, his pockets were stuffed with pearls and diamonds; and I warrant his odious black scratch periwig had been papiloted with bank-notes!—Oh! I could go distracted.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*Mrs.* ORMOND's.

Enter Mrs. ORMOND *and* RIVERS.

Mrs. ORMOND.

Miss Mandeville's manners coarse, and her person disagreeable?

Riv. Upon my word I thought so; but I've been so long absent from the fashionable circles, that possibly she may be the general taste; I'm only certain that she's not at all to mine.

Mrs. Orm. And when you spoke of her return to India—

Riv. Oh! she could not endure the very mention of it. I was really afraid she'd have gone into hysterics.

Mrs. Orm. Strange! But, however, I'll ascertain the fact to-morrow, and this mystery shall be explained.

Riv. 'Till then let the matter rest.—And now my dear Emily —*(a knocking without.)* Hey! what can be the meaning of that thundering rap?

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Lady Clara Modish.

Riv. Lady Clara Devil! and I'd rather meet the latter.—Which way is she coming up?

Serv. This way. [*Exit.*

Riv. Then I'll go down the other.

Mrs. Orm. Oh! pray stay.

Riv. No, no; I'm not yet cool enough to conceal from the woman how heartily I despise her.

Mrs. Orm. Yet perhaps her neglect of you—

Riv. I guess what you would say, my good Emily. A moment of ill humor, a dish of tea too strong, a bad run of luck last night, the indisposition of her lap-dog, or any other fine Lady-like affliction, might occasion her indifference to *my* distress—but that she could see the infant graces of your child without interest, that she could suffer without compassion an heart like yours to languish in poverty, betrays an insensibility which I never can forgive. [*Exit.*

Mrs. Orm. You must though, my dear Sir, or your heart is composed of tougher materials than I imagine. Yes, yes, Rivers and my brother must be friends, and probably that brings Lady Clara hither.—So, here she comes!

Servant *shews in* Lady Clara *and* exit.

Lady Clara. My dear Mrs. Ormond, I've just hurried hither for one instant!—Why, they tell me you've been indisposed.—You look charmingly, however: But, you cruel creature, why did not you let me know you were ill?

Mrs Orm. Knowing your exquisite sensibility, Lady Clara, surely it had been barbarous in me to torture your nerves by a recital of my sufferings.

Lady Clara. Oh! fye, fye! when the delicate attentions of friendship can alleviate—I protest, Mrs. Ormond, you've got a mighty pretty house here.

Mrs. Orm. Tolerable. Mr. Rivers insisted upon my removing hither immediately, and therefore things are not quite—

Lady Clara. Mr. Rivers! dear, that puts me in mind—I want to talk to you about him. Do you know, he put the drollest trick upon me this morning!

Mrs. Orm. (archly.) So he did upon me; but you were too cunning for him: I, poor innocent, was completely the dupe of his feigned distresses; but upon you, he tells me, they made not the slightest impression.

Lady Clara. Ha, ha, ha! no more they did—Ha, ha, ha!—*(aside.)* Spiteful thing, how I hate her!—But, my dear Mrs. Ormond, you—you relieved him then—

Mrs. Orm. Oh! the relief, in *my* power to afford him was very moderate; and in truth our exchange of presents bore no proportion to one another. I had nothing to bestow on him but a very trifle and a dish of tea, and he repaid me with notes of not less than a thousand pounds.

Lady Clara. Mercy on me! A thousand pounds for a dish of tea? How unlucky it was that I had just sent away the chocolate!*

Mrs. Orm. Then he has such plans for equipages, diamonds, and estates—It would quite fatigue you, Lady Clara, only to hear the list.

Lady Clara. Oh! I shall faint presently! *(aside.)* But I hope the dear beggar thinks this trick of his as entertaining as you and I do?

Mrs. Orm. I am afraid he takes the affair a little more seriously.

Lady Clara. But surely, my dear creature, you can explain to him—

Mrs. Orm. Believe me, Lady Clara, however great may be my cause of complaint, my brother's interest will never cease to be mine; and if my interference can possibly produce a reconciliation....

Lady Clara. You will use it? Let me die now if that isn't being extremely kind: but indeed I always said you had one of

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* This *trait* is borrowed from *Mercier's* "Habitant de la Gaudaloupe,"

the best hearts in the world. And suppose now, to lose no time, you were to bring Mr. Rivers to my house to night?

Mrs. Orm. To-night? Why really—my mourning—

Lady Clara. Oh! as to your mourning, you know you'll be considered as at home; for, is not my house, is not every thing I possess, as much yours as my own?

Mrs. Orm. You're too kind, Lady Clara; indeed you're too kind!

Lady Clara. Not at all! Oh dear, not at all! I shall expect you then, and pray bring Mr. Rivers.

Mrs. Orm. I'll do my best; but in truth I doubt my being able to prevail on him, unless you can make use of Falstaff's excuse, and protest solemnly that you knew him all the while; however, if he should not come, depend upon it's not being a fault of mine.

Lady Clara. Well now, that's a dear creature; and I hope to Heaven you may succeed! Yet should your endeavors to appease Mr. Rivers prove fruitless, I shall console myself with the reflection that at least my dear sister enjoys those advantages of which, by imprudence, I have deprived myself.—*(aside.)* Oh! I could tear her eyes out! [*Exit.*

Mrs. Orm. Ha, ha, ha! I suspect Lady Clara leaves me not too well pleased with her visit.—So, here comes Mr. Rivers.

Enter RIVERS.

Riv. So, Emily, your visitor is gone; and now let me know what brought her hither.

Mrs. Orm. Can you seriously ask that question.

Riv. Why I believe I *could* guess—your brother no doubt—

Mrs. Orm. Even so. Lady Clara's errand was to express her contrition for this morning's adventure with all possible humility, and request your presence at her house to-night for the express purpose of receiving her husband's apologies and her own.

Riv. Aye? Well! well! I'm glad to hear it—I'll go.

Mrs. Orm. Will you?

Riv. Aye, and so shall you—I intend to take the liberty of tormenting her Ladyship—and she'll not be the worse for a little wholesome mortification—

Mrs. Orm. Nay, that is a fact which I cannot take upon me to deny.

Riv. And now for the scene of action; where you shall see crowds of coxcombs, and legions of coquettes at my coming, all "*dissolve*,

And like the baseless fabric of a vision
Leave not one fop behind."

Mrs. Orm. You've a secret then for killing insects, I presume?

Riv. No, only for dispersing them, and my talisman consists in pronouncing that single cabilistical word "distress;" away they go; for in fact, my dear Emily, a fashionable friend is an absolute bird of passage.—

Which here, while Summer reigns, enjoys the day,
Wings the warm gale, and courts the kindly ray;
But soon as winter lours, and storms arise,
To brighter scenes the airy wanderer flies,
Where breathe less boisterous winds, where smile less clouded skies. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—Lord Listless.

Enter Lord Listless *and* Friponeau.

Lord List. The writ was executed, you say?

Frip. Oui, my lor; et Le Colonel Beauchamp, be tres bien lock up chez cet honnête, Monsieur Touchit.!

Lord List. Good! but unluckily Beauchamp has friends, who wont leave him there long.—Now could I find some lasting means of revenging myself on the puppy.—What say you, Monsieur?

Frip. Mais voyons, my lor, voyons! Suppose—suppose you carry off Mademoiselle Mandeville?

Lord List. I carry her off?—Why should I take the trouble?

Frip. Mon dieu! you not see?—Beauchamp love Mademoiselle à la folle; but ven all of von sudden she disappear, he vil swear, vil cry, vil go distract! and ven Mademoisselle Mandeville been two tree days wid your Lordship, serviteur à la reputation de Mademoisselle Mandeville.

Lord List. Um! the idea would be tolerable if it were not that afterwards Beauchamp might take it into his head to cut my throat.—Now that I shoudn't like, because you know it would dirty my neckcloth.

Frip. Ma foi, mi lor, en verite! dat it vould! mais l'Italie, mi lor? vy you not enlever la petite—

Lord List. Right, right!—But then how to get hold of her, monsieur?

Frip. Oh c'est bien facile! go vid a chair to Lady Clara's, and as mademoiselle go in, or as she come out, I vip her into de sedan, de chair-men vip her up, your lorship vip her away; et volia' qu'elle est prise, pardi!

Lord List. Um, could this be done quietly, and in a proper way—for a bustle always bores me, 'pon my soul!

Enter WALSINGHAM.

Wal. How, in close consultation, my Lord? Perhaps I intrude.

Lord List. Oh! By no means; I've a little business indeed, which—

Wal. A secret?

Lord List. Um! you might serve me in't, if it were not——

Wal. My dear Lord, too happy if—

Lord List. And you'll be silent?

Wal. As a conceal'd author, whose comedy has just been damn'd. I give you my word, and now——

Lord List. You must know, then, I'm on the point of eloping with a certain young lady.

Wal. You? Good heavens! how can you take so much trouble! and have you a chaise-and-four ready?

Lord List. No, but I shall order my sedan chair to be prepared immediately.

Wal. A sedan? 'Faith that's new!—Well, you'll order your chair to Gretna Green, I hope?

Lord List. Oh! you mistake the business: the Lady in question is in love with a fellow, who bores me intolerably; and I carry off his mistress, merely for the sake of plaguing him.

Wal. Merely for the sake of plaguing him!

Lord List. Nothing else, 'pon my soul! The indea's good, an't it?

Wal. Good? it's excellent!

Lord List. Now the only difficulty is, how to entice her to the spot where my servants will be waiting for her; and if any friend——

Wal. Entice her!—then she's not appris'd of the honor intended her by your Lordship?

Lord List. Has'nt the most distant idea of it; and, in fact, hates me like the devil.

Wal. Zounds! my Lord, but that makes the joke a great deal better!—And could you possibly doubt my assisting so honorable a design?—

Lord List. Why to tell the truth, (but remember your promise of secrecy) the Lady is no other than Miss Mandeville; and as you are Beauchamp's friend——

Wal. Pshaw! what does that signify?—Isn't he a commoner, an't you a peer? Isn't he poor, an't you rich? Isn't he an old friend, an't you a new acquaintance? And can you doubt which of the two I should prefer serving?—My dear Lord, pray judge a little more of me by yourself!

Lord List. (aside.) A sensible fellow, 'pon my soul!—You'll undertake then to——

Wal. And think myself too happy in being of use to you, only let your chair and servants be ready—

Lord List. Oh! Monsieur shall take care of that.—Friponeau, attend this gentleman, conduct Miss Mandeville hither, and when she arrives wake me. [*Exit* FRIPONEAU.] Good evening, Walsingham. 'Pon my soul extremely obliged to you; am indeed—a—a—a—'pon my soul! [*Exit.*

Wal. Go thy ways, thou prince of puppies! But 'tis well this fellow made me his confidant, for the consequences of his scheme might have been very unpleasant to Zorayda; but now to mar it, and, if possible, get him into a scrape, of which at present he little dreams. The scoundrel!—but alas! there are too many in the world, who, like him, would soon make themselves villains, if nature hadn't kindly prevented it by making them fools.

[*Exit.*

SCENE III.—*An anti-chamber at* Lady Clara's. [*Music within.*]

Company cross the stage. Servants pass with refreshments.

Enter Miss CHATTERALL *and* Mrs. BLAB-ALL.

Mrs. Blab. Nay, my soul, if this letter be authentic, Lady Clara must give up Miss Mandeville, or my acquaintance, I'll assure you!

Miss Chat. Oh dear! My dear, as to that, *I* shall visit Lady Clara no more at any rate, unless indeed she gives a masquerade; and then you know nobody need know whether one visits her or not.—But accept a favor from her barefaced! Lord, my love, I blush at the very thought! Oh 'tis a sad family!

Mrs. Blab. Shocking, my dear!

Miss Chat. True, my life; only conceive! Beauchamp in goal, Mrs. Ormond intriguing with him, Miss Mandeville eloped, and Lady Clara giving entertainments when her husband's going to be arrested, and her brother's at the point of death.

Mrs. Blab. Oh! fye, fye, fye! I protest I'm quite shocked.

Miss Chat. Shocked, my dear? so am I, an't I?

Mrs. Blab. But Lord Listless dying? I never heard of that before.

Miss Chat. No? Dear, I thought every body had heard that Lord Listless having discovered an intrigue between Beauchamp and Mrs. Ormond with whom he was himself on certain terms—You understand me, my dear?

Mrs. Blab. Oh Lord! yes my dear to be sure I do; well, my love, and so——

Miss Chat. Well, and so, my life, my Lord was so severe in his observations, that at length Beauchamp got into a terrible rage, rapped out three great oaths that he'd be the death of him, seized a blunderbuss (which happened to be upon the breakfast-table) shot his Lordship through the body, and the Colonel and his enamorata immediately made off for France, with the intention of offering their services to the triumvirate. How odd! an't it?

Mrs. Blab. Odd indeed!—But Lord! my life, how unlucky it was that Mrs. Ormond should happen to have a blunderbuss lying on her breakfast-table?

Miss Chat. Extremely unlucky indeed, my dear. But come let us in, and if Miss Mandeville shews her face to night, I shall

tell Lady Clara what I think of her very plainly! for after all, my dear, to own a truth, the greatest advantage I ever could find in walking strait myself in the path of virtue, was the the privilege of insulting those who step a little on one side. Come, my dear! [*Exit.*

(As they go off, enter WALSINGHAM *and* FRIPONEAU.*)*

Wal. Do you see her? There she goes!

Frip. Vid de scarlet plume?

Wal. The same: wait at the great entrance till I entice her to the door, then convey her to your master with all speed.

[*Exit Friponeau.*

Wal. Hist, hist, Miss Chatterall!

MISS CHATTERALL *returning.*

Miss Chat. Mr. Walsingham, didn't you—

Wal. Hush! speak softly! my dear young lady, I've just discovered the most abominable design, the most attrocious plot!

Miss. Chat. Eh! what? against me?

Wal. Against you!

Miss Chat. Oh? goodness defend me!

Wal. And am come to caution you not to venture near the great entrance without sufficient protection.

Miss Chat. Dear me! and why?

Wal. The infamous agents of a certain nobleman are waiting there for the express purpose of carrying you off.

Miss Chat. Lord bless me!

Wal. And though I well know your virtue to be proof against either force or artifice—

Miss Chat. Undoubtedly!

Wal. Yet, as this affair would make such a disturbance—

Miss Chat. Terrible!

Wal. Would get into all the newspapers—

Miss Chat. Odious!

Wal. And render you the subject of animadversion—

Miss Chat. Execrable!

Wal. The consequences would be, that either your friends would fight a duel on your account——

Miss Chat. Tremendous!

Wal. Or you quiet the business by a marriage with his Lordship.

Miss Chat. Charming—monstrous I mean!

Wal. The best thing you can do, therefore, is to send for a guard—

Miss Chat. I'll do it instantly—

Wal. Return home under its protection—

Miss Chat. With the utmost diligence—

Wal. And above all, take care not to approach the great entrance.

Miss Chat. I approach it!—Oh Mr. Walsingham! I'd rather die than advance a single step towards it: good evening, and a thousand thanks! [*Exeunt severally.*

(A pause, after which Miss Chatterall puts in her head, looks round cautiously, then hurries across the stage, and Exit.)

Re-enter WALSINGHAM *laughing.*

Wal. So my plot has taken effect. Now if her friends can but persuade Lord Listless to repair her injuries by marriage, (and I know he has no great fondness for fighting,) the breed will be excellent, and I shall immediately put in my claim for a puppy!

Enter ZORAYDA *(in an evening dress) as from the Assembly Room.*

Wal. What, Miss Mandeville, retiring so early!—How is this?—You seem agitated!

Zor. Oh Mr. Walsingham! I know not how—I dare not—but you are Colonel Beauchamp's friend.

Wal. He has none more sincere.

Zor. A dreadful report is circulating within—a quarrel this morning—a duel—I heard the story but imperfectly, but heard enough to alarm me for Beauchamp's safety. For pity's sake, Sir, hasten to him—and should you find this report well founded.

Wal. I will strain every nerve to prevent the consequences. But what antagonist?—

Zor. Lord Listless was named.

Wal. Lord Listless! Oh! to my certain knowledge he is otherwise engaged at present, and has too much respect for his own safety to endanger any other person's. However, I'll go immediately in search of Beauchamp.—So farewell, my dear young lady! make yourself easy and depend on my care. [*Exit.*

Zor. I cannot rejoin the unfeeling crowd within! I'll to my chamber, and if possible to rest. Ah! no—there is now no rest for me!—Repose never visits my eye-lids till they close wearied with weeping: The sounds which lull me to sleep are the groans of a forsaken father, and the spirit of dreams still repeats to me his parting curse! Oh that my next slumbers might be the slumbers of the grave! Oh that my eyes could for ever shut out light, since my heart is closed against peace for ever!

SONG.

AIR—"*Auld Robin Gray.*

COLD winter frowns, but soon again
  Shall lovely spring appear;
The sun is set, but soon again
  His glorious head shall rear:
Night veils the skies, but soon shall day
  Once more illume the plain;
But never can a guilty heart
  Be soothed to peace again.

Oh! sad is my soul!
  All my nights are pass'd in tears!
I think upon my father's house,
  And all that home endears;
Think, how that father lov'd me well,
  But all his love was vain;
I broke his heart, and never shall
  Mine own know peace again. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV.—*A magnificent apartment at Modish's, illuminated.*

MODISH, TRIFLE, LADY HUBBUB, MRS. BLAB-ALL, *&c. discovered—Card Tables, &c.—Ladies and gentlemen playing at them.*

Lady Hub. Well I never heard any thing so strange! Poor Lady Clara, I'm sure I pity her excessively, though I can't but own she deserves it.

Mrs. Blab. Richly, Lady Hubbub, richly! And for my part, I shan't be sorry to see her pride have a fall; which must be the case shortly, for they say Mr. Rivers has positively refused to advance Modish a single guinea.

Trifle. Nay it's even whispered there are three executions in the house at this moment.

Lady Hub. Oh, as for that, since I have known it, *this* house has never been without an execution in it for three days together.

Mrs. Blab. Very true, and therefore I wonder that Modish should have neglected to provide himself with a rotten borough; for he ought to have known, that as he couldn't pay his debts, he had but one alternative, and must certainly get into prison unless he got into parliament.

Lady Hub. Oh! here's Lady Clara!

Enter Lady CLARA, *splendidly dressed.*

Laky Clara (as entering.) How d'ye do? Charmed to see you! Been here long? You there Trifle!—Ah, Lady Hubbub.

Lady Hub. Oh my dear Lady Clara!

Lady Clara. What's the matter?

Lady Hub. Mr. Rivers—I'm so cencerned for you!—

Mrs. Blab. I could cry with vexation!

Lady Hub. To lose such a fortune by a trick! my dear creature, it grieves me to the heart!

Mrs. Blab. And I'm told you must part with your beautiful set of cream colored ponies?—Lord! Lord! you've no idea how that distresses me!

Lady Clara. Now let me die but you're both of you very kind; and it quite delights me that I'm able to relieve you from such excessive affliction. Whatever you may have heard to the contrary, Mr. Rivers and Modish are on the best terms possible, and I hope in a few minutes to have the pleasure of making him known to you. *(aside)* Spiteful toads!

Lady Hub. No really! Lord, I'm prodigious glad to hear it. *(aside)* I wish you were both at the bottom of the Thames!

Mrs. Blab, Delighted, my dear Lady Clara; quite delighted I protest! *(Aside.)* Another birth-day suit to cut out mine, I'd lay my life on't.

Lady Clara (aside.) Well, of all earthly torments, the sympathy of ones friends is certainly the greatest.—Ah! Miss Chatterall!—Heavens! What's the matter?

Enter Miss CHATTERALL *hastily.*

Miss Chat. Oh Lady Clara! Oh Lady Hubbub!—I shall faint, Lady Hubbub I shall certainly faint.

Lady Clara. Faint! Why, What has alarmed you?

Mod. Aye, aye!—All things in order; tell your story first, and faint afterwards.

Miss Chat. Oh! your brother, Lady Clara! your vile brother! —I can't speak for passion!

Lady Clara. What has he done?

Miss Chat. What indeed? Why he has—he has—*(bursting into tears)*—he has carried me off in a sedan chair! So he has! How monstrous! wasn't it?

Lady Clara. Carried you off!—Mercy, why should he do that!

Mod. Aye, why indeed?—Oh I don't believe a word on't.

Miss Chat. Not believe it? Oh Gemini! but it's very true though; and what's more, Sir, what's more, I'm almost morally certain you're one of his accomplices!

Mod. I?—Oh fye, Miss Chatterall, fye!

All. Oh! fye, fye, fye!

Miss Chat. Fye, indeed! Fye? Oh that ever I should live to be fyed! Lady Clara, as I hope to be married, I was carried by force to your brother's house this evening; and when he first handed me out of the sedan, to give the devil his due, I must say he was civil enough; but as soon as he saw that I was I, and nobody but myself, he yawned in my face, said I was a great bore, put me into the chair, bade the men box me up tight, and, without saying another syllable, sent me back again! How disagreeable, wasn't it?—*(crying bitterly.)*—Never, no surely never before was such an insult offered to virtue, [redacted], and the first cousin of an Irish Peer!—But I'll be revenged! I'll to my law-

yer's and have an action for burglary brought against him without delay; and if law won't do me right, I warrant my Irish uncle, Sir Blarney O'Blunderbuss will!—Oh he'll come to my assistance, good soul, at first word; will insist on his Lordship's repairing by marriage the injury done to my reputation; and when I once find myself his wife—oh what a miserable wretch I'll make him! [*Exit.*

Lady Clara (laughing.) But what can all this mean? Ha? Modish, I See Rivers advancing.

Mod. (aside.) I tremble to meet him; I feel how ungratefully I have treated him; and my only consolation is, that I felt it before I knew how much my ingratitude had cost me.

Enter RIVERS *and* Mrs. ORMOND.

Mrs. Orm. (to RIVERS.*)* Remember your promise—gentleness!

Riv. Oh, never fear!

Lady Clara (*to* Mrs. ORMOND.) And here you are at last? My dear creature, you've no notion how you've agitated me; I've expected you this half hour, and was almost afraid that some accident had happened—and Mr. Rivers too, I declare!—My dear Sir, I can scarcely thank you for this visit for laughing when I think of the ridiculous affair of this morning: well I never was so quizzed in my life; but you must certainly have a world of humor!

Riv. (drily.) Um, aye, it was ridiculous enough; but yet the best part of the joke is still to come.

Lady Clara, Is it? Dear, I'm prodigiously glad to hear it, for it has entersained me so, you have no idea—

Riv. Pardon me, I can conceive it perfectly.

Lady Clara. Impossible, quite impossible! And indeed I called at your house this evening for the sole purpose of saying how extremely——

Riv. My house!—Mrs. Ormond's you mean. Your Ladyship forgets—I live at the Three Blue Posts in Little Britain.

Lady Clara [illegible] ha! very true; and Modish must pay his respects [illegible]e Three Blue Posts, I suppose?

Riv. May I expect so much condescension from Mr. Modish?

Mod. Mr. Rivers, I will not aggravate my fault by attempting to excuse it; I am heartily ashamed of my behaviour this morning, and see myself in such offensive colors, that I cannot hope by any present submissions to obtain your pardon.

Riv. Give me your hand, Sir, the best thing is certainly not to commit a fault, but the next best is to be sorry for it when committed.—And yet, when you reflect on Lady Clara's very flattering reception of me this morning, you cannot possibly found any expectations on my assistance, though, Heaven knows, at this very moment you stand wofully in need of it.

Lady Clara. At this moment?

Riv. Certainly; for in the first place there is an execution in the house.

Trifle. Good night, Modish. [*Exit.*

Riv. There goes one! *(aside.)*—Then, Modish, Squeez'em the usurer has taken out a writ against you.

Mrs. Blab. Your servant Lady Clara, [*Exit.*

Riv. (aside.) There go two!—So that you will certainly go to prison to-morrow, unless you can borrow a considerable sum among your acquaintance—

Lady Hub. Call Lady Hubbub's servants, if you please, Sir, [*Exit.*

Riv. (aside.) There goes a third!—And can get two of your friends to stand bail for you.

All. Mr. Modish, we wish you a very good night? [*Exeunt.*

Manent RIVERS, MODISH, LADY CLARA, *and* MRS. ORMOND,

Riv. Bravo! bravo! There goes the whole covey!

Mod. Narrow hearted rascals!

Lady Clara. What, all gone!—Lord bless me!—what, all!—

Riv. Aye, aye, Lady Clara, the coast is clear; and what otherwise could you expect? what else than—

Mrs. Orm. Hush! hush! my dear Sir, surely they are already sufficiently mortified, and to punish them [redacted]ld be both cruel and unnecessary—suffer me then to plead for my brother —and—

Mod. Emily, you must plead in vain; Lady Clara's imprudence has been too gross, my ingratitude too culpable to—

" Shock'd at my sickly plight and strange condition,
" I've ask'd advice of maint and maint physician;
" And having heard them with one voice declare,
" Nothing could cure me but a change of air,
" 'Tis my design, for health and for diversion,
" To Albion's Isle to make a short excursion——"
At this old Pluto look'd extremely glum,
First scartch'd his head, then frown'd, and bit his thumb;
At length the business sifted to the dregs,
Thus spoke the king with the flame-colored legs:
" Go, Bess," he answer'd ('twas not o'er civil
To crop my name, but 'tis an ill-bred Divle!)
" Go Bess," he answered; " you've my full permission
" To visit London on this one condition.
" To-night at Drury, (so the papers tell)
" Is play'd a *Comédie* that's *tout nouvelle*"——
[His majesty speaks French extremely well]
" I to this piece your new existence tie,
" And, as it lives or dies, you live or die.
" Should the dread ordeal with success be pass'd,
" Your second life shall for the season last;
" But, should it fail, instant (I'd have you know it)
" Here you return, and with you—bring the poet."
I took his offer, pack'd up hoods and ruffs,
Strait bodice, farthingales, and little muffs;
And least old Dis should take his promise back,
Through yon trap-door reach'd Drury in a crack.
Now then I come before the public's throne,
To plead the author's cause and eke my own.
Think with what terrors must my bosom tremble,
Since that the piece is bad I can't dissemble;
Yet, weary with my journey, faint with fright;
Pray don't oblige me to set out to-night;
Rather with kind applause prolong my stay,
And for a few short nights support the play,

But, should my prayers prove vain, should the piece fail,
The plot thought dull,—the humor coarse and stale,
Bess out of sorts, and Poet out of feather,
Are damn'd alike, and jog down stairs together.

FINIS.

LOVERS' VOWS:

OR,

THE NATURAL SON;

A COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN OF

AUGUSTUS VON KOTZEBUE,

1808.

her father must suffer at her absence, and comfort her with the hope of obtaining his pardon;—But be gentle with her, I entreat you; moderate your naturally impetuous temper; and beware not to heap fresh anguish on an heart, whose wounds are already deep—whose sufferings are already exquisite. [*Exit.*

Riv. Poor Emily! She little thinks that the man from whose friendship she hopes so much, in a few hours will either be expiring himself, or a fugitive from England, stained with the blood of Beauchamp! My will, however secures her in affluence, and after that—

Enter Mrs. ORMOND *and* ZORAYDA *veiled, through the Folding Doors.*

Riv. But see, she comes with her protogée—Ha! veiled, I see!

Mrs Orm. (aside to Zorayda.) Nay, dearest girl, why thus terrified? Doubt it not, all will turn out well.

Zor. (aside to Mrs. Ormond.) Yes, yes! 'tis he!—How I tremble at his presence!

Mrs Orm. In vain have I endeavored, my dear Sir, to convince Miss Mandeville that she dreads, without reason, the severity of your strictures. I assure her that you will speak to her—

Riv. Most soothingly! most kindly! even as a father would speak to his daughter.

Mrs. Orm. (eagerly.) Right! exactly right! Remember your promise—Speak to her as an indulgent father would to his daughter, his beloved and repentant daughter. I leave you with her. My dear girl—

Zor. (embracing her.) Oh, Madam!

Mrs. Orm. (aside.) Would it were over! Yet what should I dread? I know well the excellence of his nature; and hard indeed must that heart be which can listen unmoved to the pleading of such a penitent. [*Exit.*

Riv. (After a pause.) I—I—presume, Miss Mandeville, you are aware how delicate a task Mrs. Ormand has imposed on me. *(Zorayda bows.)* So delicate, in truth, that no sentiment could induce me to [illegible]aking it less strong than gratitude for your generous intentions towards myself, and the interest which Emily's account of you first inspired me with, and which your own appearance could not fail to increase.

Zor. (aside.) Oh that dear voice! yet how terrible it sounds!

Riv. I will not dwell upon the worth of public opinion, the blessings of self-satisfaction, the torment of present shame and of future remorse; I know full well how light these considerations weigh against love when a young hand holds the ballance. 'Twas your heart which led you astray; to your heart then will I make my appeal; and, if it be not marble, I shall not make my appeal in vain. Miss Mandeville, I will speak of your father—will explain how heavy is a father's curse—will paint how dreadful is a father's anguish!—Well can I describe that anguish! I have felt it, feel it still! I once had a daughter!—

Zor. (aside.) His voice faulters!

Riv. This daughter—Oh! how I loved her, words cannot say—thought cannot measure!—This daughter sacrificed me for a villain, fled from my paternal roof, and—her flight has broken my heart—her ingratitude has dug my grave!—

Zor. (aside.) How I suffer!—Oh my God!

Riv. (recovering himself.) Young Lady, my daughter's seducer was Beauchamp! He has deserted her; so, doubt it not, will he desert you. My execration is upon her! Oh! let not your father's fall upon *you* as heavy. Haste to him ere it be too late! Wait not till his resentment becomes rooted—'till his resolve becomes immutable—'till he sheds such burning tears as I now shed—'till he suffers such bitter pangs as I now suffer—'till he curses as I now curse—

Zor. (throwing aside her veil, and sinking on her knees.) Spare me! spare me!

Riv. Zorayda!—*(After a pause.)* Away!

Zor. Pardon! pardon!

Riv. Leave me, girl!

Zor. While I have life, never again! Never; no, not even though you still frown on me! Nay, struggle not!—Father, I am a poor desperate distracted creature! Still shall my lips, till sealed by death, cry to you for mercy—still will I thus clasp my father's hand, till he cuts off mine, or else forgives me!

Riv. Zorayda! Girl?—Hence, foolish t[illegible]

Zor. I hope not for kindness, I sue but for pardon—I ask not to live happy in your love, I plead but to die soothed by

your forgiveness.—Still loath my fault, frown not on me still, dash me on the earth, trample me in the dust, kill me—but forgive me!

Riv. Her voice—her tears—I can support them no longer.

[*Breaks from her and hastens to the door.*]

Zor. [*Wringing her hands in despair.*] Cruel! cruel! My God! my God! Oh! were my mother but alive!

Riv. [*starting.*] Her mother!

Zor. Ah! he stops. She lives then! lives too in his heart!—Oh! plead thou for me, sainted spirit! plead thou too, in former sorrows my greatest comfort, in present sufferings my only hope!—[*taking a picture from her bosom*] Look on it, my father! 'tis the portrait of your wife, of your adored Zorayda!—Look on these eyes—you have so often said they were like mine. Be moved by my voice—you have so often said it reminded you of my mother's!—'Tis she who thus sinks at your feet—'tis she who now cries to you, pardon your erring, your repentant child!—Father, I stand on the brink of ruin! already the ground gives way beneath my feet—yet a moment, and I am lost!—Save me! Father, save me! If not for my sake, if not for your own, oh father, father! save me for my mother's sake!

Riv. (*looking alternately at the portrait and her.*) Zorayda—Zorayda!—My child! my child! (*Sinks upon her bosom.*)

Enter MODISH, LADY, CLARA, *and* MRS. ORMOND.

Mrs. Orm. He yields, and we triumph.

Riv. (*Recovering himself.*) Yet mark me. Zorayda—Beauchamp—

Zor. Alas!

Riv. Never must you meet again; to-morrow either sees him stained with my blood, or this hand must—

Enter BEAUCHAMP *and* WALSINGHAM.

All. How! Beauchamp.

Riv. Astonishment!—(*To Zorayda sternly*) Follow me!

Beau. Stay, Mr. Rivers; hear me for one moment.

Riv. Hear you? Amazing confidence!—What? hear you extenuate your crime? hear you say that—

Beau. That I am guilty, that misery ought to be my lot; but that, if *my* lot be misery, it must also be Zorayda's. On your affection for her I throw myself. Great have been my faults, great have been Zorayday's injuries—yet, if suffered to repair them—

Riv. Repair them! and your wife—

Beau. Her death has been long reported; this letter, just received, ascertains the fact. My hand is free, and from the first moment I beheld her that hand was destined to your daughter. I feel how little I deserve her—feel the whole weight of my offence, and loath myself for its commission:—but my punishment would be Zorayday's—but Zorady's fate is interwoven with mine. Be this my plea, when thus I kneel before you, imploring permission to expiate my faults to your daughter and yourself by affection for my wife and unremitting attention to her father.

Wal. Nor imagine, Sir, that your wealth influences this proposal. Continue still your dispositions in Mrs. Ormond's favor; my fortune is ample, it has long been destined to Beauchamp, and the day which makes him your son makes him my heir.

Riv. (hesitating.) I know not—I ought not—

Mrs. Orm. Dear Sir, if *my* entreaties—

Wal. If my advice—

Zor. (embracing him.) Dear, dear father!

All. Pardon! pardon!

Riv. I am vanquished! Rise, rise my son, and receive from me Zorayda!

Beau. My love, my wife! Oh, teach me to thank your father for so invaluable a gift!

Zor. Edward, to be yours, and with his approbation!—Dear, dear Sir, is not all this a dream? Am I indeed again your Zorayda? Is your affection indeed mine again?

Riv. Yours it was ever; and surely, had I loved you less, I had been appeased more easily. Many a pang, my child, has your absence cost me; but the pleasure of this moment overpays them all. Sweet, oh! sweet are a father's tears shed on the bosom of a repentant child. Hear this, ye flinty-hearted—hear it, and pardon!—Yet how is this? when every other face wears a smile, why hangs a cloud on the brow of my Zorayda?

Zor. Ah, my father! 'tis a cloud which must never be removed; for 'tis the gloom of self-reproach!—I have erred, and been forgiven; but am I therefore less culpable?—Your indulgence has been great; but is my fault therefore less enormous? Oh, no, no, no! The calm of innocence has for ever left me, the courage of conscious virtue must be mine no more! Still must the memory of errors past torment me, and embitter every future joy:—Still must I blush to read scorn in the world's eye, suspicion in my husband's—and still must feel this painful truth most keenly, that she who once deviates from the paths of virtue, though she may obtain the forgiveness of others, never can obtain her own!

EPILOGUE.

BY THE AUTHOR.

THUNDER AND LIGHTNING.

The Ghost of QUEEN ELIZABETH *rises in a Flash of Fire.*

STARE not, fair dames, nor criticize my dress;
You see before you jolly old Queen Bess,
Who from the land of roasting, boiling, stewing,
Is come to see what you above are doing!
Below, where some slight piccadilloes sent me,
Long did a wish, a foolish wish torment me,
For some few days in Britain to revive,
And view that land once more, I lov'd so well alive:—
This wish so teas'd me, morn, night, noon and eve,
That I resolv'd to ask old Pluto's leave;
And though I knew to gain the point was hard,
Boldly dispatch'd Lord Burleigh with this card.
" Queen Bess's comp'ts to Pluto—begs to say
" She hopes this card will find him well to-day;
" And should her visit now convenient be,
" Means to drink sulphur with his majesty."
For in our lower realms the truth to utter,
Sulphur means tea, and brimstone bread and butter.
Well, he receiv'd me, and (my sulphur sip'd,)
"Dear Sir," quoth I—" I'm nervous, sick, and hip'd,
" Besides have frightful dreams, and truth to speak,
" Scarce eat a chicken's pinion in a week.

" Shock'd at my sickly plight and strange condition,
" I've ask'd advice of maint and maint physician;
" And having heard them with one voice declare,
" Nothing could cure me but a change of air,
" 'Tis my design, for health and for diversion,
" To Albion's Isle to make a short excursion——"
At this old Pluto look'd extremely glum,
First scartch'd his head, then frown'd, and bit his thumb;
At length the business sifted to the dregs,
Thus spoke the king with the flame-colored legs:
" Go, Bess," he answer'd ('twas not o'er civil
To crop my name, but 'tis an ill-bred Divle!)
" Go Bess," he answered; " you've my full permission
" To visit London on this one condition.
" To-night at Drury, (so the papers tell)
" Is play'd a *Comédie* that's *tout nouvelle*"——
[His majesty speaks French extremely well]
" I to this piece your new existence tie,
" And, as it lives or dies, you live or die.
" Should the dread ordeal with success be pass'd,
" Your second life shall for the season last;
" But, should it fail, instant (I'd have you know it)
" Here you return, and with you—bring the poet."
I took his offer, pack'd up hoods and ruffs,
Strait bodice, farthingales, and little muffs;
And least old Dis should take his promise back,
Through yon trap-door reach'd Drury in a crack.
Now then I come before the public's throne,
To plead the author's cause and eke my own.
Think with what terrors must my bosom tremble,
Since that the piece is bad I can't dissemble;
Yet, weary with my journey, faint with fright;
Pray don't oblige me to set out to-night;
Rather with kind applause prolong my stay,
And for a few short nights support the play,

But, should my prayers prove vain, should the piece fail,
The plot thought dull,—the humor coarse and stale,
Bess out of sorts, and Poet out of feather,
Are damn'd alike, and jog down stairs together.

FINIS.

LOVERS' VOWS:

OR,

THE NATURAL SON;

A COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN OF

AUGUSTUS VON KOTZEBUE,

1798.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

BARON WILDENHAIN, *a Colonel out of Service.*
COUNT VON DER MULDE.
PASTOR *of the Parish in which the* Baron's *Estate lies.*
CHRISTIAN, *the* Baron's *Butler.*
FREDERICK, *a young Soldier.*
LANDLORD.
FARMER.
LABOURER.
JEW.
GAMEKEEPER.
COTTAGER.

AMELIA, *the* Baron's *Daughter.*
WILHELMINA.
COTTAGER'S WIFE.
COUNTRY GIRL.

Servants and Gamekeepers.

LOVERS' VOWS.

ACT I.

SCENE, *a Road near a Town. The last Houses of a small Village are visible.*

Enter LANDLORD *from a Public House, drawing* WILHELMINA *after him.*

Land. There's no longer any room for you, I tell you. We have a wake to day in our village, and all the country people, as they pass, will come into my house with their wives and children ; so I must have every corner at liberty.

Wil. Can you thrust a poor sick woman out of doors ?

Land. I don't thrust you.

Wil. Your cruelty will break my heart.

Land. It will not come to that.

Wil. I have spent my last penny with you.

Land. That is the very reason why I send you away. Where can you procure any more ?

Wil. I can work.

Land. Why, you can scarcely move your hand.

Wil. My strength will return.

Land. When that is the case, you may return too.

Wil. Where shall I remain in the mean time.

Land. It is fine weather, you may remain any where.

Wil. Who will clothe me, when this my only wretched garment is drenched with dew and rain ?

Land. He who clothes the lilies of the field.

Wil. Who will bestow on me a morsel of bread to allay my hunger ?

Land. He who feeds the fowls of the air.

Wil. Cruel man ! you know I have not tasted any thing since yesterday.

Land. Sick people eat little : it is not wholesome to overload their stomachs.

Wil. I will pay honestly for every thing I have.

Land. By what means ? These are hard times.

Wil. My fate is hard too.

Land. I'll tell you what. This is the high road, and it is much frequented. Ask some compassionate soul to bestow a trifle on you.

Wil. I beg! No; rather will I starve.

Land. Mercy on us! What a fine lady! Many an honest mother's child has begged before now, let me tell you. Try, try. Custom makes every thing easy.—(Wilhelmina *has seated herself upon a stone under a tree.*)—For instance, here comes somebody. I'll teach you how to begin.

Enter a LABOURER, *with his tools.*

Good day to you.

Lab. Good day.

Land. Neighbour Nicholas, will you bestow a trifle on this poor woman?—(Labourer *passes and exit.*)—That was not of much use, for the poor devil is himself obliged to work for his daily bread. But yonder I see our fat farmer, who puts three hellers into the poor box every Sunday. Who knows but he may be charitably inclined on a week-day too.

Enter a FAT FARMER, *walking very leisurely.*

Good morning to you, Sir; good morning to you! There's a poor sick woman sitting under yon tree. Will you please to bestow a trifle on her?

Far. Is she not ashamed of herself? She is still young, and can work.

Land. She has had a fever.

Far. Ay, one must work hard now-a-days, one must toil from morn to night, for money is scarce.

Land. Pay for her breakfast; will you, Sir? She is hungry.

Far.—*(As he passes.)*—We have had a bad harvest this year, and the distemper has killed my best cattle. [*Exit.*

Land. The miser! That fellow is always brooding over his dollars. By the way, now, that I am talking of brooding, I remember my old hen ought to hatch her eggs to-day: I must look after her directly. [*Exit into the house.*

(Wilhelmina *is left alone. Her dress betrays extreme poverty. Her countenance bears the marks of sickness and anxiety, yet the remains of former beauty are still visible.)*

Wil. Oh, God! thou knowest I never was thus unfeeling, while I still possessed [illegible]ing. Oh thou, whose guardian power has hitherto protected me from dark despair, accept my thanks. Oh that I could but work again! This fever has completely deprived me of my strength. Alas! if my Frederick knew that his mother was fallen a victim to penury—Is he still alive? Or [illegible] some heap of earth already cover him? Thou author of my sufferings, I will not curse thee. God grant thee prosperity and peace, if such blessings ever be bestowed upon the seducer of innocence. Should chance conduct thee hither; shouldst thou, amidst these rags, and in this woe-worn form, recognize thy former blooming Wilhelmina, what, what would be

thy sensations? Alas! I am hungry. Oh that I had but a morsel of bread! Well, I will endeavour to be patient. I shall surely not be allowed to starve on the highway.

Enter a COUNTRY GIRL, *carrying eggs and milk to market. She is passing nimbly on, and sees* Wilhelmina.

Girl. God bless you, good woman!

Wil. I thank you sincerely. Dearest girl, can you bestow a piece of bread on a poor woman?

Girl.—*(Stopping with a look of compassion.)*—Bread! No; I can't, indeed, for I have none. Are you hungry?

Wil. Alas! yes.

Girl. Good Heavens! I have eat all my bread for breakfast, and I have no money. I am going to the town; and when I have sold my milk and eggs, I'll bring you a dreyer. But—you will still be hungry till I return.—Will you drink some of my milk?

Wil. Yes, my good child.

Girl. There, then! Take as much as you like.—*(Holds the pail to her lips with great kindness.)*—Won't you have a little more?—Drink!—Drink!—You are very welcome.

Wil. Heaven reward you for your charity! You have preserved me.

Girl. I am glad to hear it.—*(Nods kindly to her.)*—Good day! God bless you! [*Exit singing.*

Wil.—(*Looking after her.*)—Such formerly was I—as happy, as contented, as susceptible of good impressions.

Enter a GAMEKEEPER, *with a gun, and a brace of pointers.*

Wil. I wish you good diversion, honest man.

Gam.—(*As he passes.*)—Damnation! The first thing I meet on my road is an old woman! I would as soon have seen a magpie, or the devil. I'm sure to have bad sport to-day—Perhaps not a shot. Go to hell, you old harridan! [*Exit.*

Wil. That man conceals the hardness of his heart behind the veil of superstition. Here comes some one else—A Jew! If I could beg, I would implore his aid; for Christians bear the name of Christians, and scarcely ever recollect the doctrines they profess to follow.

Enter a JEW, *who, as he passes, espies* Wilhelmina, *stops, and surveys her for a moment.*

Wil. Heaven bless you!

Jew. I thank you, poor woman. You look ill.

Wil. I have had a fever.

Jew.—(*Hastily puts his hand into his pocket, draws out a small purse, and gives her some money.*—There! I can spare no more, for I have but little myself. [*Exit.*

Wil.—(*Calling after him with great emotion.*)—A thousand thanks!—A thousand thanks! Was I wrong in my conjecture? The heart and the creed have no concern with each other.

Enter FREDERICK, *with his knapsack on his back. He walks cheerfully on, and is humming a tune; but at the sight of the sign over the door of the public house, stops.*

Fre. H—m! I'll quench my thirst here, I think! This hot weather makes me feel quite parched. But let me consult my pocket in the first place.—(*Draws out a little money, and counts it.*) —I think I have as much as will pay for my breakfast and dinner; and at night, please God, I shall have reached home.—Holla! landlord!—(*Espies* Wilhelmina)—But what do I see yonder! A poor sick woman, who appears to be quite exhausted. She does not beg, but her countenance claims assistance. Should we never be charitable till we are asked, and reminded that we ought to be so? Shame on it! No. I must wait till noon before I drink. If I do a good action, I shall not feel either hungry or thirsty. (*Goes towards her in order to give her the money, which he already held in his hand to pay for his liquor.*)

Wil.—(*Surveying him minutely, utters a loud shriek.*)—Frederick!

Fre.—(*Starts, gazes intently on her; casts away his money, knapsack, hat, stick, in short, every thing which encumbers him, and rushes into her arms.*)—Mother!—(*Both are speechless.* Frederick *first recovers.*)—Mother! For God's sake—Do I find you in this wretched state?—Mother!—What means this?—Speak!

Wil. (*Trembling.*)—I cannot—speak—dear son—dear Frederick—The bliss—the transport—

Fre. Compose yourself—dear, good mother!—(*She rests her head on his breast.*)—Compose yourself.—How you tremble!—You are fainting.

Wil. I am so weak—I feel so ill—my head is so giddy—All yesterday I had nothing to eat.

Fre.—(*Springing up with looks of horror, and hiding his face with both hands.*)—Almighty God!—(*Runs to his knapsack, tears it open, and draws out a piece of bread.*)—Here is some bread!—(*Collects the money which he had thrown away, and adds to it what he has in his pocket.*)—Here is my little stock of money. I'll sell my coat—my cloak—my arms. Oh, mother, mother!—Holla, there! Landlord!—(*Knocks violently at the door of the public house.*)

Land.—(*Looking out of a window.*)—What now?

Fre. A bottle of wine! Directly! Directly!

Land. A bottle of wine!

Fre. Yes, I tell you.

Land. For whom pray?

Fre. For me!—Zounds! Be quick.

Land. Well—But, Mr. Soldier, can you pay for it?

Fre. Here is the money. Make haste, or I'll break every window in your house.

Land. Patience! Patience! [*Shuts the window.*

Fre. (*To his mother.*)—Fasted all day! And I had plenty! Last night I had meat and wine to supper, while my mother was fasting.—Oh, God! Oh, God!—How is all my joy embittered!

Wil. Peace, my dear Frederick. I see you again—I am well again. I have been very ill—and had no hopes of ever beholding you once more on earth.

Fre. Ill! And I was not with you! Now, I'll never leave you again. See! I'm grown tall and stout; I can work for you.

Enter LANDLORD *with a bottle and glass.*

Land. Here's wine for you! A precious vintage, I promise you. Such a glass is not to be tasted every day. To be sure it is only Franconia wine; but it has the sourness of Rhenish.

Fre. Give it me directly. What is the price of the trash?

Land. Trash! Such a capital article as that, trash! The real juice of the grape, I promise you. I sell none of your common vintner's balderdash. I have another precious wine in my cellar, which you shall taste. Such a fine rich oily flavour!—(Frederick *impatiently attempts to take the bottle and glass from him.*)—Hold! Hold! The money, first, if you please. This bottle costs half a guilder.

Fre.—(*Giving him all his money.*)—There! There!—(*Pours out a glass, and gives it to his mother, who drinks, and eats a little bread with it.*)

Land.—(*Counting the money.*)—There ought to be another dreyer—But, however, one must have compassion. As it is intended for the poor old woman, I'll not insist upon the dreyer. But take care you don't break the bottle or glass. [*Exit.*

Wil. I thank you, dear Frederick. Wine from a son's hands instills new life.

Fre. Don't talk too much, mother, till you have recovered your strength.

Wil. Tell me how you have fared during the last five years.

Fre. I have met with good and bad luck mixed together. One day my pocket was full—the next I was worth nothing.

Wil. It is long since you wrote to me.

Fre. Why, my dear mother, postage is one of the severest taxes on a soldier. Consider how far we were quartered from you—A letter would almost have cost me half a year's pay; and I must have something to subsist on. I always consoled myself with the idea that my mother was in good health. and that it would make no great difference if I deferred my letter for

another week or two. Thus one week passed after another. Forgive me, mother.

Wil. When anxiety is at an end, it is easy to forgive. Have you, then, obtained your discharge?

Fre. No, not yet. I have only procured leave of absence for a couple of months. This I did for certain reasons; but as you want me, I will remain with you.

Wil. That is not necessary, my dear Frederick. Your visit will enliven me, and restore me to health. I shall then be again strong enough to work; and you can return to your regiment; for I would not interfere with your fortune. But you said you had obtained leave of absence for certain reasons—May I know those reasons?

Fre. You shall know all, mother, When I left you five years since, you had provided me plentifully with clothes, linen and money; but one trifle you had forgotten—the certificate of my birth. I was then a wild careless lad, but fifteen years of age, and thought little of the matter. This has since occasioned me much uneasiness. Often, when I have been heartily tired of a soldier's restless life, I have wished to obtain my discharge, and learn some reputable trade. But whenever I applied to any tradesman, his first question always was, "Where is the certificate of your birth?" This silenced me. I was vexed, and remained a soldier; for in that profession it is only asked whether the heart be in the right place, and a certificate of birth is as little regarded as the diploma of nobility. The circumstance, however, led me into many a quarrel. My comrades were become acquainted with it; and if any of them owed me a grudge, or were rather drunk, they would sneer at me, and torment me with sarcastic remarks. Once or twice I had been so far exasperated as to fight, the consequence of which was, that I was placed under arrest, and severely repremanded. At length my commanding officer on another of these quarrels taking place, about [illegible] weeks ago, summoned me to attend him in his own room. Oh, mother! he is a noble, generous man! "Boettcher," said he to me, "I am sorry to hear that you are so constantly incurring punishment by being engaged in quarrels; for in other respects I am satisfied with your attention to the service, and have a good opinion of you. The serjeant has told me the cause of all this. I, therefore, advise you to write home for the certificate of your birth; or, if you rather chuse to fetch it yourself, I will grant you leave of absence for a couple of months." Oh, mother! your form floated before my eyes while he addressed me. I kissed his hand, and stammered out my thanks. He then put a dollar into my hand. "Go my lad," said he; "I wish you a good journey, Don't fail to return at the appointed time."—Well, mother, here I am, as you see; and now you know all that has happened.

Wil.—(*Who has listened to him with great confusion and embarrassment.*)—You are come, therefore, dear Frederick, for the certificate of your birth?

Fre. Yes.

Wil. Oh heavens!

Fre. What is the matter? —(Wilhelmina *bursts into a flood of tears.*)—For God's sake, what is the matter?

Wil You can have no certificate of your birth.

Fre. Can have none!

Wil. You are a natural son.

Fre. Indeed!—And who is my father?

Wil. Alas! the wildness of your look destroys me.

Fre. (*Recollecting himself, in a gentle and affectionate tone.*)—No, dear mother, I am still your son; but tell me, who is my father?

Wil. When you left me five years since, you were still too young to be entrusted with such a secret. You have now reached an age at which you have a claim upon my confidence. You are become a man, and a good man. My sweet maternal hopes are quite fulfilled. I have often heard how consoling, how reviving to a sufferer was the communication of her sorrows. The tears which those sorrows draw from another's eyes, alleviate the pangs which the sufferer seemed for ever destined to endure. Thanks, thanks to benignant Heaven, the hour at last is come, when I may, for the first time, feel this consolatory sensation. My son is my confidant—be he also my judge. Of a rigid judge I must be afraid; but my son will not be rigid.

Fre. Proceed, good mother, Relieve your heart.

Wil. Yes, dear Frederick, I will tell you all—Yet—shame and confusion bind my tongue. You must not look at me during my recital.

Fre. Do I not know my mother's heart! Cursed be the thought which condemns you for a weakness: of a crime you are incapable.

Wil. Yonder village, whose church you at a distance see towering above the trees, is my native place. In that church I was baptized. In that church I was first instructed in our faith. My parents were worthy pious cottagers. They were poor, but strictly honest. When I was fourteen years of age, the lady of the manor one day saw me. She was pleased with me, took me with her to the castle, and felt a pleasure in forming my rude talents. She put good books into my hands. I read; I learnt French and music. My conceptions and capacity developed themselves. But at the same time my vanity—Yes—under the mask of reserve, I became ridiculously vain. I was seventeen years old when the son of my benefactress, who was an officer

in the Saxon service, obtained leave to visit his relations. I had never before seen him. He was a handsome and engaging young man. He talked to me of love and marriage. He was the first who had done homage to my charms. Do not look at me, dear Frederick, or I cannot proceed.—(Frederick *casts down his eyes, and presses her hand to his heart.*)—I was a credulous being, and was easily robbed of my innocence. The hypocrite feigned the most ardent affection—promised to marry me at the death of his aged mother—vowed fidelity and constancy—alas!—and I forgot my pious parents—the precepts of our good old pastor—the kindness of my benefactress—I became pregnant. Oh, Frederick! Frederick! whenever I look at yonder church, the late venerable pastor with his silver locks, seems to stand before me. On the day that I first went to confession, how did he affect my young heart! How full of true devotion and of virtue was my mind! At that time I would have ventured with a certainty of triumph upon any temptation, and (Oh, God! how was it possible!) this deep, this rooted impression did a wild, unthinking youth erase by a few love-sick looks, by a few love-sick words! I became pregnant. We both awoke from the sweet delirium, and beheld with horror the prospect of futurity. I had ventured every thing. He feared the anger of his mother, who was a good woman, but inexorably strict and rigid. How kindly did he implore me, how impressively did he conjure me, not to betray him! How affectionately, how tenderly, did he promise to reward me at a future period for all that I endured on his account! He succeeded. I pledged to him my word that I would be silent, that I would bury the name of my seducer, as well as his much-loved form, in my heart; that for his sake I would encounter every misfortune which awaited me—for, oh, how dearly did I love him! Much, much, indeed, I have encountered. He departed, satisfied with my promise. The time of my delivery approached, and I found it impossible any longer to conceal my situation. Alas! I was harshly treated when I persisted in my determination not to confess who was the father of my child. I was driven from the castle with every mark of disgrace; and, when I reached the door of my afflicted parents, I was again refused admittance. My father would have exceeded all bounds; but my mother tore him hastily away, at the moment he was about to curse me. She returned, threw me a crooked dollar, which she wore round her neck, and wept. Since that day I have never seen her. The dollar I have still in my possession.—(*Produces it.*)—Rather would I have starved than have parted with it.—(*Gazes at it, kisses it, and puts it again in her bosom.*)—Without a home, without money, without friends, I wandered a whole night through open fields. I once came near the stream where the mill stands, and almost was I tempted to

throw myself under the wheels of the mill, and thus put an end to my miserable existence. But suddenly our pastor's venerable form again appeared to me. I started back; and while I thought I saw him, all his instructions occurred to me, and roused my confidence. As soon as the morning dawned I went to his house. He received me with kindness, and did not reproach me. "What is done," said he, "cannot be undone. God is merciful to the penitent. Reform, my daughter, and all may yet be well. You must not remain in the village, for that will only be a mortification to you, and likewise a scandal to my parish. But—" Here he put a piece of gold into my hand, and delivered to me a letter, which he had written for me.—"Go to the town, my daughter, and seek the honest old widow to whom this letter is addressed. With her you may remain in safety, and she will teach you how to earn an honest livelihood." With these words he laid his hand upon my head, gave me his blessing, and promised to appease my father's resentment. Oh! I felt newly born; and on my way to the town, I reconciled myself with the Almighty, by solemnly vowing never again to swerve from the path of virtue.—I have kept my vow,—Now look at me again, Frederick.—(Frederick *clasps her with speechless emotion in his arms.—A pause.*)—Your birth was to me the cause of much joy, and of much sorrow. I twice wrote to your father—but—Heaven knows whether he received my letters; I never have received any answer to them.

Fre.—(*Violently.*)—Never any answer!

Wil. Check your indignation, my son. It was in time of war, and the regiment to which he belonged was in the field. There was a commotion through the whole empire; for the troops of three powers were alternately pursuing each other. How easily, therefore, might my letters be lost! No, I am certain he never received them; for he was not a villain. After that time, I did not chuse to trouble him, from a sensation—perhaps of pride. I thought, if he had not forgotten me, he would come in search of me, and would easily learn from the pastor where I was to be found.—But he did not come; and some years after, I even heard—(*with a sigh*)—that he was married. I then bade farewell to my last hope. In silent retirement I earned my subsistence by manual labour, and by instructing a few children in what I myself had learnt at the castle. You, dear Frederick, were my only comfort; and on your education I bestowed every thing which was not absolutely necessary for my own subsistence. My diligence was not ill rewarded, for you were a good boy; but the wildness of your youthful ardour, your bent towards a soldier's life, and your resolution to seek your fortune in the wide world, caused me much uneasiness. At last I thought it must be as God ordained; and if it were

your destination, I ought not to prevent it, even if the parting were to break my heart. Five years ago, therefore, I allowed you to go, and gave you as much as I could spare—Perhaps more than I could spare; for I was in good health, and then we are not apt to anticipate illness. Had this continued, I could have earned more than I wanted; I should have been a rich woman in my situation, and could have made my son an annual Christmas present. But I was attacked by a lingering and consuming illness. My earnings were at an end, and my little savings were scarcely sufficient to pay my physician and my nurse. A few days since, therefore, I was obliged to leave my little hut, being no longer able to discharge the rent, and was compelled to wander on the highway with this stick, this sack, and these rags, soliciting a morsal of bread from the charity of those who happened to pass.

Fre. Had your Frederick suspected this, how bitter would have been to him every morsal which he eat, and every drop which he drank! Well, Heaven be praised that I have found you alive at my return; for now I will remain with you for ever. I will send information of this to my commanding officer, and he may take it in what light he pleases; for if he even call it desertion, I will not again forsake my mother. Alas! I have unfortunately learnt no art, no trade; but I have a couple of stout nervous arms, with which I can guide the plough, or wield the flail. I'll hire myself to some farmer as a day-labourer, and at night write for some lawyer. I write a good legible hand, thanks to you, my dear mother. We shall succeed, no doubt. God will assist us. God is ever ready to support those who revere their parents.

Wil.—(*Clasps him with emotion in her arms.*—What princess can offer me any thing in exchange for such a blissful moment?

Fre. One thing I had forgotten, mother. What was my father's name?

Wil. Baron Wildenhain.

Fre. And does he live on this estate?

Wil. There formerly his mother lived. She is dead. He married a rich lady in Franconia, and, as is said, through affection for her, went to dwell there. A steward occupies the castle, who manages every thing as he likes.

Fre. I will away to the Baron—I will face him boldly. I will bear you upon my back to him. How far is it to Franconia?—Twenty to thirty miles, perhaps.—How! Did he escape his conscience by flying so short a way? Truly, it must be a lazy, sluggish conscience, if after following him twenty years, it has not yet overtaken him. Oh, shame, shame on him! Why should I claim acquaintance with my father, if he be a villain? Cannot my heart be satisfied with a mother—a mother who

has taught me to love? Why should I seek a father who teaches me to hate? No; I will not go to him. He may remain quietly where he is, feasting and revelling till his last hour, and then he may see what account he can give of his actions to the Almighty Judge. We do not want him, mother; we will live without him—But what is the matter? How your countenance is altered in a single moment! Mother, what is the matter?

Wil.—*(Very much exhausted, and almost fainting.)*—Nothing, nothing. The transport—Too much talking. I should like a little rest.

Fre. Heavens! I never perceived before that we were on the highway.—(*Knocks at the door of the public house.*)—Holla! Landlord!

Land. (*Opening the window.*)—Well! What now?

Fre. Let this good woman have a bed directly.

Land. *(With a sneer.)*—She have a bed, indeed!—Ha, Ha, Ha!—A pretty joke, truly! She slept last night in my stable, and has, perhaps, bewitched all the cattle in it.

[*Shuts the window.*

Fre.—*(Taking up a stone in a rage.)*—Infernal scoundrel!—*(Looks at his mother, and throws the stone away.)* Oh, my poor mother!—(*Knocks in the anguish of despair, at the door of a cottage, which stands further in the back ground.*)—Holla! Holla!

Enter a COTTAGER *from the hut.*

Cot. God bless you! What do you want?

Fre. Good friend, you see that this poor sick woman is fainting in the open air. She is my mother. Let her have some little spot to rest upon for half an hour. For Heaven's sake, do; and God will reward you for it.

Cot. Hold your tongue. I understand you.—*(Putting his head into the house.)*—Rachel, make up the bed directly. You may lay the child on the bench while you do it,—*(Returns.)*—Don't begin a long history again about God's reward and Heaven's blessing. If God were to reward all such trifles, he would have enough to do.—Come! take hold of the good woman on that side, while I support her on this, and let us lead her in with care. She shall have as good a bed as I am worth; but she will not find much more in my cottage, I must own.

[*They conduct her into the hut.*

ACT II.

SCENE, *a Room in the Cottage.* WILHELMINA *is discovered sitting on a wooden Stool, and resting her Head on* FREDERICK'S *Breast. The* COTTAGER *and his* WIFE *are busily employed in procuring whatever can conduce to the Comfort of their sick Guest.*

Fre.——HAVE you nothing which will refresh and strengthen her, good people?

Wife. Run, husband, and fetch a bottle of wine from our neighbour's public house.

Fre. Oh, spare yourselves that trouble. His wine is as sour as his disposition. She has already drank some of it, and I fear it has poisoned her.

Cot. Look, Rachel, whether the black hen has laid an egg this morning. A new-laid egg boiled soft——

Wife. Or a handful of ripe currants——

Cot. Or—the best thing I have—a piece of bacon——

Wife. There is still a little brandy standing below in the dairy.

Fre. (*Deeply affected*).—God reward and bless you for your readiness to assist my poor mother!—(*To* Wilhelmina.)—You have heard these good people?—(Wilhelmina *nods.*)—Can you relish any thing they have offered?—(Wilhelmina *makes a motion with her hand that she cannot.*)—Alas! is there, then, no surgeon in the neighbourhood?

Cot. We have a farrier in the village, whom we always call Doctor; and I never saw any other in my life.

Fre. Merciful Heavens! What shall I do? She will die in my arms! Gracious God! have compassion on our distresses. Pray, pray, good people—I cannot pray.

Wil.—(*In a broken voice*)—Be at ease, dear Frederick—I am well—only faint—very faint.—A glass of—good wine——

Fre. Yes, mother, instantly. Oh, God! where can I procure it? I have no money. I have nothing at all.

Wife. There! Now, you see, husband, if you had not carried the money to the steward yesterday——

Cot. I might have assisted this good woman. Why, that's true, to be sure. But how are we to manage matters now? As true as I am an honest man, I have not a single dreyer in the house.

Fre. Then I will—yes, I will beg—and if no one will be charitable, I will steal. Good people, take care of her, and do what you can for her. I shall soon be with you again. [*Exit.*

Cot. If he would go to our pastor's, I am sure he would succeed.

Wil. Is the old pastor still alive.

Wife. Oh, no. God bless his worthy heart. He died about two years since, old and weary of life.

Cot. Yes, he went out like a lamp, as one may say.

Wife.—(*Wiping her eyes.*)—We have shed many a tear for the loss of him.

Cot.—(*The same.*)—He was our father.

Wil.—(*Deeply affected.*)—Our father.

Wife. We shall never have such another.

Cot. Come, come! give every one his due—and despise nobody. Our present pastor is a good worthy man too.

Wife. Why, he is, to be sure; but he is so young.

Cot. I own his appearance does not claim quite so much respect, and we can't confide in him so soon; but our late pastor had been young too.

Wife.—(*To* Wilhelmina.)—This gentleman was tutor to our Baron's daughter; and as my Lord was very well satisfied with him, he gave him this living.

Cot. Ay, and he deserved it too; for the young lady of the castle (God bless her!) is a friendly kind creature as ever lived.

Wife. Yes, she has no pride; for when she comes into the church, she nods here and there, on this side and on that, to the country women.

Cot. And when she is in the pew, she holds her fan before her face, and prays with real devotion.

Wife. And during the sermon she never turns her eyes from the pastor.

Wil.—(*Alarmed.*)—What lady is this?

Cot. Our Baron's daughter.

Wil. Is she here?

Wife. To be sure she is. Did'nt you know that? It will be five weeks next Friday since my Lord's family arrived at the castle.

Wil. Do you mean Baron Wildenhain?

Wife. Exactly.

Wil. And his lady?

Cot. His lady is dead. They lived several hundred miles from this place; and during her Ladyship's life the Baron never came hither, which has caused us many a sorrow.—(*In a lower voice, and in a confidential tone.*)—Folks say she was a haughty woman, and full of whims. Well! well! We ought not to speak ill of the dead. Our Baron is a good gentleman. She had no sooner closed her eyes, than he ordered his coach and came to Wildenhain. Oh! he must like this place; for he was born here, and has often played with me in the meadows, and danced with my wife on a Sunday under the lime trees. You remember that, Rachel—eh?

Wife. That I do, as well as if it had been yesterday. He used to wear a red coat, and a pair of buckles made of glittering stones.

Cot. Afterwards, when he became an officer, he was rather wild; but we must make allowances for young people. The soil was good, and the best of land sometimes produces weeds.

Wife. But do you recollect, husband, what happened at the castle between him and Boetcher's daughter, Wilhelmina? That was too bad.

Cot. Pshaw! hold your tongue, Rachel. Who would think of talking about that, when so many years are past since it happened, and when nobody knows whether he was really the father of the child? for she never would confess it.

Wife. He was the father, and nobody else, that I am sure of; and I'll bet my best gown and cap upon it. No, no, husband, you must not defend that—it was too bad. Who knows whether the poor creature did not perish in distress? Her father too, old Boetcher, was driven to his grave by it, and died broken-hearted. [Wilhelmina *faints.*

Cot.—(*Who first observes it.*)—Rachel! Rachel! Support her!—Zounds support her.

Wife. Oh! mercy on us!—The poor woman!

Cot. Away with her to bed directly! Then let us send for the pastor. She will hardly live till morning. [*They carry her in.*

SCENE, *a Room in the Castle. The breakfast Table is discovered. A* Servant *places on the Table a Tea-urn, a lighted Candle and a Wax-taper.*

Enter the BARON, *in his Night-gown.*

Baron. Is the Count in bed still?

Ser. No my Lord. He has sent for his servant to dress his hair.

Baron. I might have discovered that; for the hall, as I passed through it, was scented with *poudre a la Marechal.*—Call my daughter. *Exit* Servant.

(*The* Baron *fills and lights his pipe.*)

I cannot but think that my friend, the old privy counsellor, has sent me a complete coxcomb. Every thing he says and does is as insipid and silly as his countenance. No—I will not be too hasty. My Amelia is too dear to me to be bestowed on any one who is not worthy of her. I must be rather better acquainted with the young man; for my intimacy with his father shall never induce me to make my daughter miserable. The poor girl would consent, and would then sit in a corner dejected and repining, and blaming her father, who ought to have understood these matters better. What a pity, what a great pity it is, that the girl was not a boy! That the name of Wildenhain must be

extinct!—*(blows out the wax-taper, with which he had lighted his pipe)*—and vanish like the flame which I now blow out. My fine estates, my delightful prospects, my honest tenantry—all, all will fall into the hands of a stranger. How unfortunate!

Enter AMELIA *in a careless morning dress.*

Amelia.—*(Kisses the* Baron's *hand.)*—Good morning to you, my dear father,

Baron. Good morning, Amelia. Have you slept well?

Amelia. Oh, yes!

Baron. Indeed! You have slept very well? You were not at all uneasy?

Amelia. No. The gnats, to be sure, hummed rather too much in my ears.

Baron. The gnats! Well, that is of no great consequence. Let a bough of juniper be burnt in the room, and you will not be troubled with them again. Gnats are more easily driven away than maggots.

Amelia. Oh, no. You may drive maggots away by boiling a few peas with a little quicksilver, for that will kill them.

Baron.—*(Smiling.)*—Indeed! It is well for you, Amelia, if you as yet know no maggots which cannot be destroyed by a plate of peas.

Amelia. Oh, you mean maggots in the head. No, father, I am not troubled with them.

Baron. So much the better! But how indeed, can a lively girl, when only sixteen years of age, be troubled with whims, while she has a father who loves her, and a suitor who begs permission to love her? How do you like the Count von der Mulde.

Amelia. Very well.

Baron. Don't you blush when I mention his name?

Amelia.—*(Feeling her cheeks.)*—No.

Baron. No!—Hem!—Have you not been dreaming of him?

Amelia. No.

Baron. Have not you dreamt at all, then?

Amelia.—*(Reflecting.)*—Yes. I dreamt of our pastor.

Baron. Ha! Ha! As he stood before you, and demanded the ring?

Amelia. Oh, no! I dreamt we were in Franconia, and that he was still my tutor. He was just going to leave us, and I wept very much; and when I awoke, my eyes were really wet.

Baron. I'll tell you what, Amelia; when you dream of the pastor again, fancy him at the altar, and you with the Count von der Mulde before him, exchanging the marriage vow. What think you of this.

Amelia. If you desire it, my dear father, I will obey most cheerfully.

Baron. Zounds! No. I don't desire it. But I want to know whether you love him—whether you feel sincere affection for him. When we spent a short time in town last winter, you saw him several times at public places of amusement.

Amelia. Should I feel an affection for all the men I see at public places of amusement?

Baron. Amelia, don't be so stupid. I mean that the Count von der Mulde flirted and paid attention to you, danced a couple of elegant minuets with you, perfumed your handkerchief with *eau de mille fleurs*, and at the same time whispered the Lord knows how many pretty things in your ear.

Amelia. Yes, the Lord knows, as you say, father; but I am sure I don't!

Baron. What! have you forgotten them?

Amelia. If it be your wish, I will endeavour to recollect them.

Baron. No, no. You need not trouble yourself. If you must *endeavour* to recollect them, you will bring them from a corner of your memory, not from a corner of your heart. You don't love him, then?

Amelia. I believe I don't.

Baron.—(*Aside.*)—I believe so too. But I must tell you what connection there is between his visit and my interrogatories. His father is a privy counsellor—a man of fortune and consequence—Do you hear?

Amelia. Yes, my dear father, I hear this, if you desire it: but our pastor always told me I was not to listen to such things? for rank and wealth, he said were only the gifts of chance.

Baron. Well, well! our pastor is perfectly in the right; but if it happen that wealth and rank are combined with merit, they are to be considered an advantage. Do you understand me.

Amelia. Yes, but—(*with perfect simplicity.*)—is that the case with the Count von der Mulde?

Baron.—(*At a loss how to reply.*)—Hem! Why—Hem! His father has rendered important services to the state. He is one of my oldest friends, and assisted me in paying my addresses to your mother. I have always had a sincere regard for him; and as he so much wishes the match between you and his son to take place, from a conviction that you will in time feel an affection for the young man——

Amelia. Does he think so?

Baron. Yes; but it almost seems you are not of the same opinion.

Amelia. Not exactly. But if you desire it, my dear father—

Baron. Zounds! I tell you that in such cases I desire nothing. A marriage without affection is slavery. None should be united, who do not feel attached to each other by a congeniality of senti-

ments. I don't want to couple a nightingale with a finch. If you like each other, why, marry each other, If you don't, let it alone.—(*In a calmer tone.*)—Do you understand me, Amelia? The whole matter rests on this question: Can you love the Count? If not, we will send him home again.

Amelia. My dear father, I really don't feel as if I should ever love him. I have so often read a description of love in romances—how strange and unaccountable are the sensations.——

Baron. Pshaw! Let me hear no more of your romances; for the authors of them know nothing about love. There are certain little symptoms of it, which can only be learnt by experience. Come, let me ask you a few questions, and answer them with sincerity.

Amelia. I always do so.

Baron. Are you pleased when any one speaks of the Count?

Amelia. Good or ill?

Baron. Good, good.

Amelia. Oh, yes. I like to hear good of any one.

Baron. But do you not feel a kind of sympathy when you hear him mentioned?—(*She shakes her head.*)—Are you not embarrassed?—(*She shakes her head.*)—Don't you sometimes wish to hear him mentioned, but have not courage to begin the subject?—(*She shakes her head.*)—Don't you defend him, when any one censures him?

Amelia. When I can, I certainly do; for our pastor.——

Baron. I am not talking about the pastor. When you see the Count, how do you feel?

Amelia. Very well,

Baron. Are you not somewhat alarmed when he approaches you?

Amelia. No.—(*Suddenly recollecting herself.*)—But yes, I am sometimes.

Baron. Ay, ay. Now we come to the point.

Amelia. Because he once trod upon my foot at a ball.

Baron. Amelia, don't be so stupid. Do you cast down your eyes when he is present?

Amelia. I don't cast down my eyes in the presence of any one.

Baron. Don't you arrange your dress, or play with the end of your sash, when he speaks to you?

Amelia. No.

Baron. Does not your face glow when he pays you a compliment, or mentions any thing which refers to love and marriage.

Amelia. I don't remember that he ever mentioned any thing of the kind.

Baron. Hem! Hem!—(*After a pause.*)—Do you ever yawn when he is talking to you?

Amelia. No, my dear father; that would be rude.

Baron. But do you ever feel inclined to yawn on those occasions?

Amelia. Yes.

Baron. Indeed! There are but little hopes, then.—Do you think him handsome?

Amelia. I don't know.

Baron. Don't you know what is meant by the term handsome? Or, don't you *feel* what is meant by the term handsome.

Amelia. Yes, I do; but I never observed him with the idea of discovering whether I thought him handsome.

Baron. This is bad, indeed. When he arrived last night—how did you feel?

Amelia. I felt vexed; for I was just walking with the pastor to the romantic little hill, when the servant so unseasonably called me away.

Baron. Unseasonably! Indeed!—But another question! Have you not to-day, without intending it, taken more pains in curling your hair, and chosen a more engaging dress?

Amelia.—(*Looking at herself.*)—This dress is not yet dirty. I have only worn it yesterday and the day before.

Baron.—(*Aside.*)—Little consolation for the Count is to be deduced from these replies. Therefore, my dear girl, you will have nothing to do with the Count, I suppose?

Amelia. If you command it, I will.

Baron.—(*Angry.*)—Hark you, Amelia. If you plague me again with your damned *desires* and *commands*, I shall—I shall—be almost inclined to command in reality.—(*In a milder tone.*)—To see you happy is my wish, and this can never be effected by a command. Matrimony, my child, is a discordant duet, if the tones do not properly agree; for which reason our great Composer has planted the pure harmony of love in our hearts. I'll send the pastor to you. He can explain these matters more clearly.

Amelia.—(*Delighted.*)—The pastor!

Baron. Yes. He can describe the duties of the married state in better terms than a father. Then examine your heart; and if you feel the Count to be the man towards whom you can fulfil these duties—why, Heaven bless you both! 'Till then, let us say no more upon the subject.—(*Calls.*)—Thomas!

Enter a SERVANT.

Go to the pastor, and request him to come hither for a quarter of an hour, if his business will allow it. [*Exit* Servant.

Amelia.—(*Calling after him.*)—Tell him I shall be glad to see him, too.

Baron.—(*Looks at his watch.*)—The young Count seems to employ plenty of time in dressing. Come, Amelia, pour out the tea.—(Amelia *seats herself at the table, and attends to the breakfast.*)—What sort of weather is it? Have you put your head out of the window yet?

Amelia. Oh, I was in the garden at five o'clock. It is a delightful morning.

Baron. One may have an hour's [illegible] then. I really don't know what to do with this man: he tires me beyond all measure with his frivolous remarks.—Ha! Our guest!

Enter COUNT.

Count. Ah, bon jour, mon Colonel. Fair lady, I kiss your hand.

(Amelia *curtsies, and returns no answer.*)

Baron. Good morning! Good morning! But, my lord, it is almost noon. In the country you must learn to rise at an earlier hour.

Count. Pardonnez, mon Colonel. I rose soon after your great clock struck six? But my *homme de chambre* was guilty of a *betise*, which has driven me to absolute despair; a loss, which *pour le moment* cannot be repaired.

Baron. I am sorry for it.

(Amelia *presents tea to the* Count.)

Count.—(*as he takes it.*)—Your most obedient and submissive slave! Is it Hebe herself, or Venus in her place.

(Amelia *moves with a smile.*)

Baron.—(*Somewhat peevishly.*)—Neither Venus nor Hebe, but Amelia Wildenhain, with your permission. May one know what you have lost?

Count.—*Oh, mon dieu!* Help me to banish from my mind the *triste* recollection, I am lost in a labyrinth of doubts and perplexities. I am as it were, *envelope*. I believe I shall be obliged to write a letter on the occasion.

Baron. Come, come! It is not so very sad a misfortune, I hope.

Count.—(*As he sips his tea.*)—Nectar, I vow! Nectar positively, angelic lady. But, how could I expect any thing else from your fair hands.

Baron. This nectar was sold to me for Congo tea,

Amelia. You have still not told us what you have lost, my Lord.

Baron.—(*Aside.*)—His understanding.

Count. You command—your slave obeys. You tear open the wounds which even your fascinating society had scarcely healed. My *homme de chambre*, the *vaut rien!* Oh, the creature is a *mauvais sujet!* When he packed up my clothes the day before

yesterday, I said to him, "*Henri*, in that window stands the little *pot de pommade*." You comprehend me, lovely Miss Amelia? I expressly said, "Don't forget it: pack it up." I dare say I repeated this four or five times. "You know, *Henri*." I said to him, "I cannot exist without this *pot de pommade*." For you must know, most amiable Amelia, this *pommade* cannot be made in Germany. The people here don't understand it. They can't give it the *odeurs*. Oh! I do assure you it is *incomparable*; it comes *tout droit* from Paris. The manufacturer of it is *parfumeur du roi*. More than once, when I have attended as *dejour* to Her Royal Highness the Princess *Adelaide*, she has said to me, "*Mon Dieu Comte*, the whole *antichambre* is *parfume*, whenever you are my *dejour*." Now only conceive, accomplished Miss Amelia—only conceive, my Lord—completely forgotten is the whole *pot de pommade*—left in the window as sure as I am a *cavalier*.

Baron. Yes, unless the mice have devoured it.

Amelia.—(*Smiling*.)—Unpardonable neglect!

Count. It is indeed! The mice too! *Helas! voila, mon Colonel, une autre raison* for *desespoir*. And could you conceive now that this careless creature, this *Henri*, has been thirty years in our service? Thirty years has he been provided with every thing for a man of his *extraction*, and how does he evince his gratitude? How does the fellow behave? He forgets the *pot de pommade!* leaves it standing in the window as sure as I am a *cavalier*. and—*oh ciel!* perhaps the vulgar German mice have swallowed the most delicate *parfume* ever produced by France! But it was impossible to moderate my anger. *Diable!* It was impossible—therefore I discharged the fellow on the spot.

Baron.—(*Starting*)—How! A man who had been thirty years in the service of your family!

Count. Oh! don't be alarmed on my account, *mon cher Colonel*. I have another *in petto*—a charming *valet*, I assure you—*un homme comme il faut*—He dresses hair like a divinity.

Amelia. And poor Henry must be discharged for such a trifle!

Count. What do you say, lovely Miss Amelia? A trifle! Can you call this a mere *bagatelle?*

Amelia. To deprive a poor man of his subsistence——

Count. *Mais, mon dieu!* How can I do less? Has he not deprived me of my *pommade?*

Amelia. Allow me to intercede in his behalf.

Count. Your *sentimens* enchant me; but your benevolence must not be abused. The fellow has an absolute *quantite* of children, who, in time, when they reach the *age mur*, will maintain their stupid father.

Amelia. Has he a family too? Oh, I beseech you, my Lord, retain him in your service.

Count. You are *amiable—ma cher Mademoiselle—vraiment, vous etes tres amiable.* You command—your slave obeys—*Henri* shall come, and submissively return you thanks.

Baron.—(*Aside, impatiently rubbing his hands.*)—No. It cannot, shall not be. The coxcomb !—(*Aloud.*)—What think you, Count, to an hour's diversion in the field before dinner ? Do you shoot ?

Count.—(*Kissing the ends of his fingers.*)—*Bravo, mon Colonel !* A most charming proposition ! I accept it with rapture. Lovely Miss Amelia, you shall see my shooting-dress. It is quite *a la mode de Paris.* I ordered it expressly for this *tour.* And my fowling-piece. Ah, *Monsieur le Colonel,* you never saw such a beauty. The stock is made of mother of pearl, and my arms are carved upon it. Oh, you have no conception of the *gout* displayed in it.

Baron.—(*Drily.*)—I asked you before, my Lord, whether you were a shooter.

Count. I have been only out one or twice in my life, and *per hazard* I killed nothing.

Baron. My gun is plain and old; but I generally bring my bird down.

Enter a SERVANT.

Ser. The pastor begs permission——

Baron. Well, Count, be as quick as you can in putting on your elegant shooting-dress. I shall be ready for you in a few minutes.

Count. I fly. Beauteous Miss Amelia, I feel the *sacrifice* I am making to your father, when for a couple of hours I thus tear myself from his *fille amiable.* [*Exit.*

Baron. Amelia, it is scarcely necessary that I should speak to the pastor, or he to you. But, however, as he is here, leave us together. I have, indeed, other matters, respecting which I wish to have some conversation with him.

Amelia.—(*As she goes.*)—Father, I think I never can love the Count.

Baron. As you please.

Amelia.—(*With great affability as she meets the* Pastor *at the door.*)—Good morning to you, my dear Sir !

Enter PASTOR.

Pastor. By your desire, my Lord——

Baron. No ceremony. Forgive me if my summons arrived at an inconvenient time. I'll tell you in a few words what I want to mention. I last night received a most wretched translation from the French, which was issued from the press about twenty years ago. I am myself in possession of a very neat

German original, of which, without vanity, I am the author. Now, I am required to erase my name from the work, and let it be bound with this vapid translation. I therefore wish to ask you, as the corrector of my book, what you think of this intended combination.

Pastor. Upon my word, I do not understand your allegory, my Lord.

Baron. Don't you !—Hem ! I'm sorry for it. I was inwardly complimenting myself upon the dextrous way in which I had managed it. Well, to be plain with you, the young Count von der Mulde is here, and wants to marry my daughter.

Pastor.—(*Starts, but immediately recovers his composure.*)—Indeed !

Baron. The man is a Count, and nothing else upon earth. He is—he is—In short, I don't like him.

Pastor.—(*Rather eagerly.*)—And miss Amelia ?

Baron.—(*Mimicking her.*)—As you desire—If you desire—What you desire —Well, well ! you have a better opinion of my understanding, I hope, than to suppose that I should influence her on such an occasion. Were the fellow's head not quite so empty, and his heart not depraved, I must own the connexion would have pleased me ; for his father is one of my most intimate friends ; and the match is on many accounts desirable in other respects.

Pastor. In other respects ! In what respect can the alliance with a man be desirable, whose head and heart are bad ?

Baron. Why—I mean with regard to rank and consequence. I will explain to you my sentiments. If Amelia were attached to another, I would not throw away a remark upon the subject, nor would I ask, "Who is the man ?"—But—(*pointing to his heart*)—"is all right here ? If so, enough—Marry each other—You have my blessing, and I hope Heaven's too." But Amelia is not attached to any other, and that alters the medium through which I consider this subject.

Pastor. And will she never be attached to any one ?

Baron. That is, to be sure, another question.—Well, I don't mean—I don't insist upon any thing of the kind. I don't desire or command it, as Amelia says. I only wish to act in such a way as that the Count von der Mulde's father shall not be offended if I don't honour the bill which he has drawn upon my daughter, for he has a right to say *value received*, having conferred many civilities and kindnesses upon me. I wish therefore, my worthy friend, that you would explain to my daughter the duties of a wife and mother ; and when she has properly understood this, I wish you to ask her whether she is willing to fulfil these duties at the side of the young Count. If she says no—not another word. What think you of this ?

Pastor. I—to be sure—I must own—I am at your service—I will speak to Miss Amelia.

Baron. Do so.—(*Heaving a deep sigh.*)—I have removed one burden from my mind; but, alas! a far heavier still oppresses it. You understand me. How is it my friend, that you have as yet been unable to gain any intelligence upon this subject?

Pastor. I have used my utmost endeavours—but hitherto in vain.

Baron. Believe me, this unfortunate circumstance causes me many a sleepless night. We are often guilty of an error in our youth, which, when advanced in life, we would give our whole fortunes to obliterate: for the man who cannot boldly turn his head to survey his past life, must be miserable, especially as the retrospect is so nearly connected with futurity. If the view be bad behind him, he must perceive a storm before him. Well, well! Let us hope the best. Farewell, my friend! I am going to take a little diversion in the field. Do what you have promised in the mean time, and dine with me at my return. [*Exit.*

Pastor.—(*Alone.*)—What a commission has he imposed upon me! Upon *me!*—(*Looking fearfully around.*)—Heaven forbid that I should encounter Amelia before I have recollected and prepared myself for the interview! At present I should be unable to say a word upon the subject. I will take a walk in the fields, and offer up a prayer to the Almighty. Then will I return. But, alas! the *instructor* must alone return—the *man* must stay at home. [*Exit.*

ACT III.

SCENE, *an open Field.* *Enter* FREDERICK.

Fre.—(*Looking at a few pieces of money, which he holds in his hand.*)——SHALL I return with this paltry sum—return to see my mother die? No. Rather will I spring into the first pond I meet with. Rather will I wander to the end of the world. Alas! I feel as if my feet were clogged with lead. I can neither proceed nor retreat. The sight of yonder straw-thatched cottage, in which my mother now lies a prey to consuming sorrow—oh, why do my eyes forever turn towards it? Are there not fertile fields and laughing meadows all around me? Why must my eyes be so powerfully attracted to that cottage, which contains all my joys and all my sorrows?—(*With asperity, while surveying the money.*)—Is this your charity, ye men? This coin

was given me by the rider of a stately steed, who was followed by a servant in a magnificent livery, glittering with silver. This was bestowed upon me by a sentimental lady, who was on her travels, and had just alighted from her carriage to admire the beauties of the country, intending hereafter to publish a description of them. "That hut," said I to her, and my tears would not allow me to proceed——"It is very picturesque and romantic," answered she, and skipped into the carriage. This was the gift of a fat priest, in an enormous wig, who at the same time called me an idle vagabond, and thereby robbed his present of its whole value.—(*Much affected*)—This dreyer was given me by a beggar unsolicited. He shared his little all with me, and blessed me too. Oh! this coin will be of great value at a future day. The Almighty Judge will repay the donor with interest, beyond earthly calculation.—(*A pause—then again looking at the money.*)—What can I attempt to buy with this? The paltry sum would not pay for the nails of my mother's coffin—and scarcely for a halter to hang myself with—(*Looking towards the horizon.*)—Yonder I see the proud turrets of the Prince's residence. Shall I go thither, and implore assistance? Alas! compassion does not dwell in cities. The cottage of Poverty is her palace, and the heart of the poor her temple. Oh, that some recruiting party would pass this way! I would engage myself for five rix dollars. Five rix dollars! What a sum! It is, perhaps, at this moment, staked on many a card.—(*Wipes the sweat from his forhead*)—Father! Father! Upon thee fall these drops of agony! Upon thee fall my despair, and whatever may be its consequences! Oh, mayst thou hereafter pant for pardon, as my poor mother is now panting for a single glass of wine.—(*The noise of shooters is heard at a distance. A gun is fired, and several pointers cross the stage.* Frederick *looks round.*) Shooters! Noblemen, perhaps! Yes, yes! They appear to be persons of rank. Well, once more will I beg. I beg for a mother. Oh, God! grant that I may find benevolent and charitable hearts.

Enter BARON.

Baron.—(*Looking behind him.*)—Here, here; my Lord!

Enter COUNT, *out of breath.*

This was a sad mistake. The dogs ran this way, but all the game escaped.

Count.—(*Breathing with difficulty.*)—*Tant mieux, tant mieux, mon Colonel.* We can take a little breath then. (*Supports himself on his gun, while the* Baron *stands in the back ground, observing the dogs.*)

Fre.—(*Advancing towards the* Count, *with reserve.*)—Noble Sir, I implore your charity.

Count.—Measuring him from head to foot, with a look of contempt.)—How, *mon ami!* You are a very impertinent fellow let me tell you. Why you have the limbs of an *Hercule*, and shoulders as broad as those of Cretan Milo. I'll venture to say you can carry an ox on your back—or an ass at least, of which there seem to be many grazing in this neighbourhood.

Fre. Perhaps I might, if you, Sir, would allow me to make the attempt.

Count. Our police is not vigilant enough with respect to vagrants and idle fellows.

Fre.—(With a significant look.)—I am of your opinion, Sir.—(*Turns to the* Baron, *who is advancing.*)—Noble Sir, have compassion on an unfortunate son, who is become a beggar for the support of his sick mother.

Baron.—(*Putting his hand into his pocket, and giving* Frederick *a trifle.*)—It would be more praise-worthy in you, young man, to work for your sick mother, than to beg for her.

Fre. Most willingly will I do that; but to-day her necessities are too urgent. Forgive me, noble Sir; what you have given me is not sufficient.

Baron.—(*With astonishment and a half smile.*)—Not sufficient!

Fre. No, by Heaven, it is not sufficient.

Baron. Singular enough! But I don't chuse to give any more.

Fre. If you possess a benevolent heart, give me a guilder.

Baron. For the first time in my life, I am told by a beggar how much I am to give him.

Fre. A guilder, noble Sir. You will thereby preserve a fellow-creature from despair.

Baron. You must have lost your senses man. Come, Count.

Count. Allons, mon Colonel.

Fre. For Heaven's sake, gentlemen, bestow one guilder on me. It will preserve the lives of two fellow-creatures.—(*Seeing them pass on, he kneels.*)—A guilder, gentlemen! You will never again purchase the salvation of a human being at so cheap a rate.—*They proceed.* Frederick *draws his side-arms, and furiously seizes the* Baron.)—Your purse or your life!

Baron.—(*Alarmed*)—How! What? Holla! Help!—(*Several* Gamekeepers *rush in, and disarm* Frederick. *The* Count *in the mean time runs away.*)

Fre. Heavens! what have I done?

Baron. Away with him to the castle! Confine him in the tower, and keep strict watch over him till I return. Take good care lest he should attempt to escape.

Fre.—(*Kneeling*)—I have only to make one request, noble Sir. I have forfeited my life, and you may do with me what

you please; but oh, assist my wretched mother, who is falling a sacrifice to penury in yonder hut. Send thither, I beseech you, and enquire whether I am telling you a falsehood. For my mother I drew that weapon, and for her will I shed my blood.

Baron. Take him to the tower, I say; and let him live on bread and water.

Fre.—*(As he is led away by the gamekeepers)*—Cursed be my father for having given me being. [*Exit.*

Baron.—(*Calling to the last of the gamekeepers.*)—Francis! run down to the village. In the first, second or third house—you will make it out—enquire for a sick woman; and if you find one, give her this purse.

Game. Very well, my Lord. [*Exit.*

Baron. This is a most singular adventure, on my soul. The young man's countenance had noble expression in it; and if it be true that he was begging for his mother, that for his mother he became a robber—Well! Well? I must investigate the matter. It will be a good subject for one of Meissner's sketches. [*Exit.*

SCENE, *a Room in the Castle.*

Enter AMELIA.

Amelia. Why do I feel so peevish and discontented? No one has done any thing to vex me. I did not intend to come into this room, but was going into the garden.—(*She is walking out, but suddenly returns.*)—No, I think I'll stay here. Yet I might as well see whether my auriculas are yet in flower, and whether the apple-kernels, which our pastor lately sowed, be sprung up. Oh, they must.—(*Again turning round.*)—Yet, if any one should come, who wanted to see me, I should not be here, and perhaps the servant might not find me. No. I'll stay here. But the time will pass very slowly.—*(Tears a nosegay)*—Hark! I hear some one at the front door. No. It was the wind. I must look how my canary-birds do. But if any one should come, and not find me in the parlour—But who can come? Why do I at once feel such a glow spreading over my face?—(*A pause. She begins to weep.*)—What can I want?—(*Sobbing.*)—Why am I thus oppressed?

Enter PASTOR.

(*Approaching him with a friendly air, and wiping away a tear.*)—Oh, good morning, my dear Sir. Reverend Sir, I should say. Excuse me, if custom makes me sometimes say *dear* Sir.

Pastor. Continue to say so, I beg, Miss Amelia. I feel a gratification in hearing that term applied to me by you.

Amelia. Do you, indeed?

Pastor. Most certainly I do. But am I mistaken, or have you really been weeping?

Amelia. Oh, I have only been shedding a few tears.

Pastor. Is not that weeping? May I enquire what caused those tears.

Amelia. I don't know.

Pastor. The recollection of her Ladyship your mother, perhaps?

Amelia. I could say, yes, but———

Pastor. Oh, I understand you. It is a little female secret. I do not wish to pry into it. Forgive me, Miss Amelia, if I appear at an unseasonable hour, but it is by his Lordship's desire.

Amelia. You are always welcome.

Pastor. Indeed! am I really? Oh, Amelia!

Amelia. My father says that we are more indebted to those who form our hearts and minds, than to those who give us mere existence. My father says this—(*casting down her eyes*)—and my heart says so too.

Pastor. What a sweet recompence is this moment for my eight years of attention.

Amelia. I was wild and giddy. I have, no doubt, often caused you much uneasiness. It is but fair that I should feel a regard for you on that account.

Pastor.—(*Aside.*)———Oh, heavens!——(*Aloud, and stammering.*(—I—I am—deputed by his Lordship—your father—to explain—Will you be seated?

Amelia—(*Brings him a chair immediately.*)—Don't let me prevent you. but I had rather stand.

Pastor.—(*Pushes the chair away.*)—The Count von der Mulde is arrived here.

Amelia. Yes.

Pastor. Do you know for what purpose?

Amelia. Yes. He wants to marry me.

Pastor. He does!—(*Somewhat eagerly.*)—But believe me, Miss Amelia, your father will not compel you to mary him against your inclination.

Amelia. I know he will not.

Pastor. But he wishes—he wants to ascertain the extent of your inclination; and has appointed me to converse with you on the subject.

Amelia. On the subject of my inclination towards the Count?

Pastor. Yes—No— towards matrimony itself.

Amelia What I do not understand must be indifferent to me, and I am totally ignorant of matrimony.

Pastor. For that very reason am I come hither, Miss Amelia. Your father has directed me to point out to you the pleasant and unpleasant side of the married state.

Amelia. Let me hear the unpleasant first, then, my dear Sir, I like to reserve the best to conclude with.

Pastor. The unpleasant! Oh, Miss Amelia, when two affectionate, congenial hearts are united to each other, matrimony has no unpleasant side. Hand-in-hand the happy couple pass through life. When they find thorns scattered on their path, they carefully and cheerfully remove them. When they arrive at a stream, the stronger bears the weaker through it. When they are obliged to climb a mountain, the stronger supports the weaker on his arm. Patience and affection are their attendants. What would be to one impossible, is to the two united a mere trifle; and when they have reached the goal, the weaker wipes the sweat from the forehead of the stronger. Joy or care takes up its abode with both at the same time. The one never shelters sorrow, while happiness is the guest of the other. Smiles play upon the countenances, or tears tremble in the eyes, of both at the same time. But their joys are more lively than the joys of a solitary individual, and their sorrows milder; for participation enhances bliss, and softens care. Thus may their life be compared to a fine summer's day—fine, even though a storm pass over; for the storm refreshes nature, and adds fresh lustre to the unclouded sun. Thus they stand arm in arm in the evening of their days, beneath the blossomed trees which they themselves have planted and reared, waiting the approach of night. Then—yes—then, indeed—one of them lies down to sleep—and that is the happy one; for the other wanders to and fro, weeping and lamenting that he cannot yet sleep. This is in such case the only unpleasant side of matrimony,

Amelia. I'll marry.

Pastor. Right, Miss Amelia! The picture is alluring; but forget not that two affectionate beings sat for it. When rank and equipages, or when caprice and levity, have induced a couple to unite themselves for life, matrimony has no pleasant side. While free, their steps were light and airy; but now the victims of their own folly, they drag along their chains. Disgust lowers upon each brow. Pictures of lost happiness appear before their eyes painted by the imagination, and more alluring in proportion to the impossibility of attaining them. Sweet enchanting ideas for ever haunt them, which, had this union not taken place, would, perhaps, never have been realized; but the certainty of which is established, were they not confined by their detested fetters. Thus they become the victims of despair, when, in another situation, the failure of anticipated happiness would but have roused their patience. Thus they accustom themselves to consider each other as the hateful cause of every misfortune which they undergo. Asperity is mingled with their conversation—coldness with their caresses. By no one are they

so easily offended as by each other. What would excite satisfaction, if it happened to a stranger, is, when it happens to either of this wretched pair, a matter of indifference to the other. Thus do they drag on a miserable life, with averted countenances, and with downcast heads, until the night approaches, and the one lies down to rest. Then does the other joyfully raise the head, and, in a tone triumph, exclaim, "Liberty! Liberty!" This is, in such a case, the only pleasant side of matrimony.

Amelia. I won't marry.

Pastor. That means, in other words, that you will not love any one.

Amelia. But—yes—I will marry—for I will love—I do love some one.

Pastor.—(*Extremely surprised and alarmed.*)—The Count von der Mulde, then?

Amelia. Oh! no, no! Don't mention that silly vain fool.—(*Putting out both her hands towards him with the most familiar confidence.*)—I love you.

Pastor. Miss Amelia! For Heaven's sake——

Amelia. I will marry you.

Pastor. Me!

Amelia. Yes, you.

Pastor, Amelia, you forget——

Amelia. What do I forget?

Pastor. That you are of noble extraction.

Amelia. What hinderance is that?

Pastor. Oh, Heavens! No. It cannot be.

Amelia. Don't you feel a regard for me?

Pastor. I love you as much as my own life.

Amelia. Well, then marry me.

Pastor Amelia, have compassion on me. I am a minister of a religion, which bestows on me much strength—yet still—still am I but a man.

Amelia You yourself have depicted the married state in the most lovely colours. I, therefore, am not the girl with whom you could wander hand-in-hand through this life—with whom you could share your joys and sorrows?

Pastor. None but you would I chuse, Amelia, were I allowed that choice. Did we but live in those golden days of equality, which enraptured poets dwell upon, none but you would I chuse. But, as the world now is, such a connexion is beyond my reach. You must marry a nobleman. Amelia Wildenhain was born to be the consort of a titled man. Whether I could make her happy will never be asked. Oh, Heavens! I am saying too much.

Amelia. Never will be asked! Yes; I shall ask that question. Have you not often told me that the heart alone can make a per-

one noble?—(*Lays her hand upon his heart.*)—Oh! I shall marry a noble man.

Pastor. Miss Amelia, call, I beseech you, your reason to your aid. A hundred arguments may be advanced in opposition to such an union. But just at this moment—Heaven knows not one occurs to me.

Amelia. Because there are none.

Pastor. There are, indeed. But my heart is so full—My heart consents—and that it must not, shall not do. Imagine to yourself how your relatives will sneer at you. They will decline all intercourse with you; be ashamed of their plebeian kinsman; invite the whole family, except yourself, on birth-days; shrug their shoulders when your name is mentioned; whisper your story in each other's ears; forbid their children to play with your's, or to be on familiar terms with them; drive past you in chariots emblazoned with the arms of Wildenheim, and followed by footmen in laced liveries; while you humbly drive to church in a plain carriage, with a servant in a grey frock behind it. They will scarcely seem to remember you when they meet you; or should they demean themselves so far as to enter into conversation, they will endeavour, by every mortifying hint, to remind you that you are the parson's wife.

Amelia. Ha! Ha! Ha! Will not that be to remind me that I am happy?

Pastor. Can you laugh on such an occasion?

Amelia. Yes, I can indeed. You must forgive it; for you have been my tutor seven years, and never supported your doctrines and instructions with any arguments so feeble as those you have just advanced.

Pastor. I am sorry you think so—truly sorry, for——

Amelia. I am very glad, for ——

Pastor.—(*Extremely embarrassed.*)—For——

Amelia. For you must marry me.

Pastor. Never!

Amelia. You know me. You know I am not an ill-tempered being; and when in your society, I always become better and better. I will take a great deal of pains to make you happy, or —No, I shall make you happy without taking any pains to effect it. We will live together so comfortably, so very comfortably—until one of us lies down to sleep, and then the other will weep—But that is far, far distant.—Come! Consent, or I shall conclude you don't feel any regard for me.

Pastor. Oh! it is a glorious sensation to be man of honour; but I feel, on this occasion, how difficult it is to acquire that sensation. Amelia, [illegible]u knew what tortures you inflict upon me—No—I cannot—I cannot, I should sink to the earth as if

struck by lightning, were I to attempt to meet the Baron with such a proposition.

Amelia. I'll do that myself.

Pastor. For Heaven's sake, forbear. To his kindness and liberality am I indebted for my present comfortable circumstances. To his friendship and goodness am I indebted for the happiest moments of my life. And shall I be such an ingrate as to mislead his only child? Oh, God! thou seest the purity of my intentions. Assist me in this trial with thy heavenly support.

Amelia. My father wishes me to marry. My father wishes to see me happy. Well! I will marry, and be happy—But with no other than you. This will I say to my father; and do you know what will be his answer? At the first moment he will, perhaps, hesitate, and say, "Amelia, are you mad?" But then he will recollect himself, and add, with a smile, "Well, well! If you wish it, God bless you both!" Then I'll kiss his hand, run out, and fall upon your neck. The villagers will soon learn that I am to be married to you. All the peasents and their wives will come to wish me joy; will implore Heaven's blessing on us; and, oh, surely, surely, Heaven will bless us. I was ignorant before what it could be that lay so heavy on my heart; but I have now discovered it, for the burden is removed.—(*Seizing his hand.*)

Pastor.—(*Withdrawing it.*)—Amelia, you almost drive me to distraction. You have robbed me of my peace of mind.

Amelia. Oh, no, no. How provoking! I hear sombody coming up stairs, and I had still a thousand things to say.

Enter CHRISTIAN.

(*peevishly.*)—Is it you, Christian?

Chris. Yes, Miss Amelia. Christian Lebrecht Goldman——

Hasten'd hither unto you
Soon as he the tidings knew.

Amelia.—(*Confused.*)—What tidings?

Chris. Tidings which we all enjoy.

Pastor.—(*Alarmed*)—You have been listening to our conversation, then?

Chris. Not I, most reverend Sir. Listeners hear no good of themselves. An old faithful servant, Miss Amelia, who has often carried her Ladyship, your mother, in his arms, and afterwards has often had the honour of receiving a box on the ear from her Ladyship's fair hand, wishes, on this happy *occasion*, to wait on you with his *congratulations*.

Sing, oh Muse, and sound, oh lyre!

Amelia. My dear Christian, I am [redacted] just now inclined to listen to your lyre. And what can you have to sing about to-day more than usual?

Chris. Oh, my dearest, sweetest young lady, it is impossible that I can be silent to-day.

Sing, oh Muse, and sound, oh lyre!
Grant me more than usual fire.
Hither, hither, hither come,
Trumpet, fife, and kettle-drum!
Join me in the lofty song,
Which shall boldly run along
Like a torrent———

Amelia. It does run along like a torrent, indeed, my dear Christian. Pray, try to proceed in humble prose.

Chris. Impossible, Miss Amelia! There has never been a birth, a christening, or a wedding, since I have had the honor to serve this noble family, and the noble family of my late Lady, which old Christian's ready and obedient muse has not celebrated. In the space of forty-six years, three hundred and ninety-seven congratulations have flowed from my pen. To-day I shall finish my three hundred and ninety-eighth. Who knows how soon a happy marriage may give occasion for my three hundred and ninety-ninth? Nine months after which my four hundredth may perhaps be wanted.

Amelia. To-day is Friday. That is the only remarkable circumstance with which I am acquainted.

Chris. Friday! Very true, Miss Amelia. But it is a day marked by Heaven as a day of joy; for our noble Lord the Baron has escaped a most imminent danger.

Amelia. Danger! My father! What do you mean?

Chris. Unto you I will unfold
What the gamekeepers have told.

Amelia.—(*Impatiently, and with great anxiety.*)—Quick then! What is the matter?

Chris. The Baron and the Count (good lack!)
Were wand'ring o'er th' unbeaten track,
And both attentively did watch
For any thing that they could catch.
Three turnip-closes they had past,
When they espied a hare at last.

Amelia. Oh! for Heaven's sake proceed in prose.

Chris. Well, Ma'm, as you insist upon it, I will, if I can. The Baron killed his hare, and a very fine one it is. I have just had the honor of seeing it. His Lordship has wounded it most terribly in the left fore-foot.

Amelia.—(*Impatient*[illegible]—Go on, go on. What happened to my father?

Chris. A second hare had just been found, and the dogs were behaving [illegible]ly well, among which it is no injustice to men-

tion Ponto; for a stauncher dog never went into a field. Well! their Lordships, the Baron and Count, were suddenly accosted by a soldier, who implored their charity. One of the gamekeepers was a witness to the whole transaction at a distance. He saw his Lordship the Baron, actuated by his charitable nature, draw a piece of money from his pocket, and give it to the aforementioned soldier. Well! now, what think you? The ungrateful, audacious villain suddenly drew his bayonet, rushed like a mad dog at my master, and if the gamekeepers had not instantly sprung forward, I poor old man! should have been under the necessity of composing an elegy and an epitaph.

Amelia.—(*Affrighted*)—Heavens!

Pastor. A robber—by broad day-light! That is singular indeed.

Chris. I shall write a ballad in Burger's style on the occasion.

Pastor. Is not the man secured?

Chris. To be sure he is. His Lordship gave orders, that, till further investigation could be made, he was to be confined in the tower. The gamekeeper, who brought the intelligence, says, the whole party will soon be here.—(*Walks to the window.*)—I verily believe—the sun dazzles my eyes a little—I verily believe they are coming yonder.

Sing, oh Muse, and sound, oh lyre! [*Exit.*

(Amelia *and the* Pastor *walk to the window.*)

Amelia. I never saw a robber in my life. He must have a dreadful countenance.

Pastor. Did you never see the female parricide in Lavater's Fragments?

Amelia. Horrible! A female parricide! Is there on this earth a creature so depraved? But look! The young man comes nearer. What an interesting, what a noble look he has! That melancholy, too, which overspreads his countenance! No, no; that cannot be a robber's countenance, I pity the poor man. Look! Oh Heavens! The gamekeepers are leading him to the tower. Hard-hearted men! Now they lock the door: now he is left in the horrid prison. What are the unfortunate young man's sensations!

Pastor.—(*Aside.*)—Hardly more distressing than mine.

Enter BARON.

Amelia.—(*Meeting him.*)—I congratulate you on your escape, most sincerely, dear father.

Baron. Let me have no more congratulations, I beseech you; for old Christian poured out such a volley of them in lyrics and alexandrines, as I came up stairs, that he has almost stunned me.

Pastor. His account is true, then? The story seemed incredible.

Amelia. Is that young man with the interesting countenance robber?

Baron. He is; but I am almost inclined to believe that he was compelled by necessity, for the first and last time in his life. It was a most extraordinary adventure. The young man begged me in his distress, and I gave him a trifle. I might have given him something more, but the game just at that moment occupied my mind. You know, good pastor, when a man is in search of diversion, he pays but little regard to the sufferings of his fellow-creatures. In short, he wanted more. Despair was expressed in his looks, but I turned my back upon him. He then forgot himself, and drew his side-arms; but I'll bet my life against your nose-rings, Amelia, that he is not accustomed to such practices.

Amelia. Oh, I am sure he is not.

Baron. He trembled when he seized me. A child might have overpowered him. I almost wish I had suffered him to escape. This affair may cost him his life, and I might have saved the life of a fellow-creature for a guilder! If my people had not seen it—But the bad example—Come with me into my room, good pastor, and let us consider how we can best save this young man's life; for should he fall into the hands of justice, the law will condemn him without mercy. [*Going.*

Amelia. Dear father, I have had a great deal of conversation with the Pastor.

Baron. Have you? With respect to the holy state of matrimony?

Amelia. Yes, I have told him——

Pastor.—(*Much confused.*)—In compliance with your request———

Amelia. He won't believe me———

Pastor. I have explained to Miss Amelia———

Amelia. And I am sure I spoke from my heart———

Pastor.—(*Pointing to the door.*)—May I beg———

Amelia. But his diffidence———

Pastor. The result of our conversation I will explain in your room.

Baron. What the deuce do you both mean? You won't allow each other to say a word. Amelia, have you forgotten the common rules of civility?

Amelia. Oh, no, dear father! But I may marry whom I like?

Baron. Of course.

Amelia.—(*To the* Pastor.)—Do you hear?

Pastor.—(*Suddenly puts his handkerchief to his face.*—I beg pardon—My nose bleeds. [*Exit.*

Baron.—(*Calling after him.*)—I expect you. [*Going.*

Amelia. Stop one moment, dear father, I have something of importance to communicate.

Baron.—(*Laughing.*)—Something of importance! You want a new fan, I suppose. [*Exit.*

Amelia.—(*Alone,*)—A fan! I almost believe I do want a fan.—No. This is of no use. The heat which oppresses me is lodged within my bosom. Heavens! How my heart beats! I really love the Pastor most sincerely. How unfortunate it was that his nose should just begin to bleed at that moment! No; I can't endure the Count. When I look at my father or the Pastor, I feel a kind of respect; but I only feel disposed to ridicule the Count. If I were to marry him, what silly tricks I should play with him!—(*Walks to the window.*)—The tower is still shut. Oh! how dreadful it must be to be confined in prison! I wonder whether the servants will remember to take him any victuals.—(*Beckoning and calling.*)—Christian! Christian! Come hither directly.—The young man pleases me, though I don't know how or why. He has risked his life for his mother, and no bad man would do that.

Enter CHRISTIAN.

Christian, have you given the prisoner any thing to eat?

Chris. Yes, sweet Miss Amelia, I have.

Amelia. What have you given him?

Chris. Nice rye bread and clear pump-water.

Amelia. For shame, Christian! Go into the kitchen directly, and ask the cook for some cold meat. Then fetch a bottle of wine from the cellar, and take them to the prisoner.

Chris. Most lovely Miss Amelia, I
Would you obey most willingly.

But, for the present, he must be satisfied with bread and water; for his Lordship has expressly ordered——

Amelia. Oh, that my father did at first when he was in a passion.

Chris. What he commands when in a passion, it is his servant's duty to obey in cold blood.

Amelia. You are a silly man, Christian. Are you grown so old without having learnt how to comfort a fellow-creature in distress? Give me the key of the cellar. I'll go myself.

Chris. Most lovely Miss Amelia, I
Would you obey most willingly.
But——

Amelia. Give me the key directly, I command you.

Chris.—(*Presents the key.*)—I shall go instantly to his Lordship, and exonerate myself from any blame which may ensue.

Amelia. That you may. [*Exit.*

Chris.—(*After a pause, shaking his head.*)

Rash will youth be ever found,
While the earth shall turn around;
Heedless, if from what they do
Good or evil may ensue.
Never taking any care
To avoid the lurking snare.
Youths, if steady you will be,
Come and listen unto me.
Poetry with truth shall chime,
And you'll bless old Christian's rhyme. [*Exit.*

ACT IV.

SCENE, *a Prison in an old Tower of the Castle.*

FREDERICK *is discovered alone.*

Fre. THUS can a few poor moments, thus can a single voracious hour swallow the whole happiness of a human being. When I this morning left the inn where I had slept, how merrily I hummed my morning song, and gazed at the rising sun! I revelled in idea at the table of joy, and indulged myself in the transporting anticipation of again beholding my good mother. I would steal, thought I, into the street where she dwelt, and stoop as I passed the window, lest she should espy me. I would then, thought I, gently tap at the door, and she would lay aside her needle-work to see who was there. Then, how my heart would beat, as I heard her approaching footsteps—as the door was opened—as I rushed into her arms!—Farewell, farewell, for ever, ye beauteous airy castles, ye lovely and alluring bubbles. At my return to my native country, the first object which meets my eyes is my dying mother—my first habitation a prison—and my first walk, to the place of execution!—Oh, righteous God! have I deserved my fate? or dost thou visit the sins of the father on the son? Hold! hold! I am losing myself in a labyrinth. To endure with patience the afflictions ordained by Providence was the lesson taught me by my mother, and her share of afflictions has been large indeed! Oh, God! thou wilt repay us in another world for all the misery we undergo in this. [*Gazes towards Heaven with uplifted hands.*

Enter AMELIA *with a Plate of Meat and a Bottle of Wine.*

(*Turning to the side from whence the noise proceeds.*)—Who comes?

Amelia. Good friend, I have brought you some refreshment. You are hungry and thirsty, I dare say.

Fre. Oh, no!

Amelia. There is a bottle of old wine, and a little cold meat.

Fre.—(*Hastily.*)—Old wine, said you? Really good old wine?

Amelia. I don't understand such things; but I have often heard my father say that this wine is a real cordial.

Fre. Accept my warmest thanks, fair generous unknown. This bottle of wine is to me a most valuable present. Oh, hasten, hasten, gentle, benevolent lady! Send some one with this bottle to the neighbouring village. Close to the public-house stands a small cottage, in which lies a sick woman—To her give this wine, if she be still alive.—(*Returns the wine.*)—Away! Away! I beseech you. Dear amiable being, save my mother, and you will be my guardian angel.

Amelia.—(*Much affected.*)—Good man! you are not a villain, not a murderer—are you?

Fre. Heaven be thanked, I still deserve that you, good lady, should thus interest yourself in my behalf.

Amelia. I'll go, and send another bottle of wine to your mother. Keep this for yourself. [*Going.*

Fre. Allow me but one more question. Who are you, lovely, generous creature, that I may name you in my prayers to the Almighty?

Amelia. My father is Baron Wildenhain, the owner of this estate.

Fre. Just Heavens!

Amelia. What is the matter?

Fre.—(*Shuddering.*)—And the man whom I attacked today———

Amelia. Was my father.

Fre. My father!

Amelia. He quite alarms me. [*Runs out.*

Fre.—(*Repeating the words in most violent agitation.*) Was my father! Eternal Justice! thou dost not slumber. The man against whom I raised my arm to day was—my father! In another moment I might have been a parricide! Hoo! an icy coldness courses through my veins. My hair bristles towards Heaven. A mist floats before my eyes. I cannot breathe.—(*Sinks into the chair. A pause.*)—How, the dread idea rages in my brain! What clouds and vapours dim my sight, seeming to change their forms each moment as they pass! And if fate had destined he should perish thus, if I had perpetrated the despe-

rate deed—whose, all-righteous Judge! whose would have been the guilt! Wouldst not thou thyself have armed the son to avenge on his unnatural father the injuries his mother had sustained? Oh, Zadig!—(*Sinks into meditation. A pause.*)—But this lovely, good, angelic creature, who just left me—What a new sensation awakes in my bosom! This amiable being is my sister!—But that animal—that coxcomb, who was with my father in the field—is he my brother? Most probably. He is the only heir to these domains, and seems, as often is the case on such occasions, a spoilt child, taught from his infancy to pride himself on birth, and on the wealth he one day will inherit, while I—his brother—and my hapless mother—are starving!

Enter PASTOR.

Pastor. Heaven bless you!

Fre. And you Sir! If I may judge by your dress, you are a minister of the church, and consequently a messenger of peace. You are welcome to me in both capacities.

Pastor. I wish to be a messenger of peace to your soul, and shall not use reproaches; for your own conscience will speak more powerfully than I can.

Fre. Right, worthy Pastor! But, when the conscience is silent, are you not of opinion that the crime is doubtful?

Pastor. Yes—unless it has been perpetrated by a most wicked and obdurate heart indeed.

Fre. That is not my case. I would not exchange my heart for that of any prince—or any priest. Forgive me, Sir; I did not intend to reflect on you by that declaration.

Pastor. Even if you did, I know that gentleness is the sister of the religion which I teach.

Fre. I only meant to say that my heart is not callous; and yet my conscience does not tell me that my conduct has to-day been criminal.

Pastor. Do not deceive yourself. Self-love sometimes usurps the place of conscience.

Fre. No! no! What a pity it is that I do not understand how to arrange my ideas—that I can only feel, and am not able to demonstrate! Pray, Sir, what was my crime? That I would have robbed? Oh, Sir! fancy yourself for a single moment in my situation. Have you too any parent?

Pastor. No. I became an orphan when very young.

Fre. That I much lament; for it renders a fair decision on your part impossible. But I will, nevertheless, describe my situation to you if I can. When a man looks round, and sees how Nature, from her horn of plenty, scatters sustenance and superfluity around; when he beholds this spectacle at the side of a sick mother, who, with parched tongue, is sinking to her

grave, for want of nourishment; when, after having witnessed this, he sees the wealthy, pampered Noble pass, who denies him a guilder, though he is on the brink of despair, lest—lest the hare should escape—then, Sir, then suddenly awakes the sensation of equality among mankind. He resumes his rights; for kind nature does not abandon him, though fortune does. He involuntarily stretches forth his hand to take his little share of the gifts which nature has provided for all. He does not rob—but takes what is his due—and he does right.

Pastor. Were such principles universally adopted, the bands of society would be cut asunder, and civilized nations converted into Arabian hordes.

Fre. That is possible; and it is also possible that we should not, on that account, be less happy. Among the hospitable Arabians, my mother would not have been allowed to perish on the highway.

Pastor.—(Surprised.)—Young man, you seem to have enjoyed an education above your rank in life.

Fre. Of that no more. I am obliged to my mother for this, as well as every thing else. But I want to explain why my conscience does not accuse me. The judge decides according to the exact letter of the law; the divine should not decide according to the deed itself, but well consider the motives which excited it. In my case, a judge will condemn me; but you, Sir, will acquit me. That the satiated epicure, while picking a pheasant's bone, should let his neighbour's rye-bread lie unmolested, is not to be considered meritorious.

Pastor, Well, young man, allowing your sophistry to be sound argument, allowing that your very particular situation justified you in *taking* what another would not *give*, does this also exculpate you from the guilt of murder, which you were on the point of committing?

Fre. It does not, I am willing to grant; but I was only the instrument of a Higher Power. In this occurrence, you but perceive a solitary link in the chain; which is held by an invisible hand. I cannot explain myself on this subject, nor will I attempt to exculpate myself; yet cheerfully shall I appear before the tribunal of justice, and calmly shall I meet my fate, convinced that an Almighty hand has written with my blood the accomplishment of a greater purpose in the book of fate.

Pastor. Extraordinary young man, it is worth some trouble to become more nearly acquainted with you, and to give another turn, perhaps, to many of your sentiments. If it be in your power, remain with me a few weeks. I will take your sick mother into my house.

Fre.—(Embracing him.)—Accept my warmest thanks for your good intentions. To my mother you may be of service.

As to myself, you know I am a pastor, and must give myself for ever. Make any use you think proper of this intelligence, which the laws of hospitality oblige me to conceal.

Pastor. You are mistaken. You are in the hands of a man whose sole view is to serve you. Let Frederick come, and accomplish your marriage with Agatha. Let Cottager Wildenhain give what has appeared to-day. You are at liberty. He shall answer to Heaven for it; and to relieve you from embarrassment with the execution of a parent, will the inheritance of a brother.

Fre. What is the name of this generous man?

Pastor. Baron Wildenhain.

Fre. Wildenhain!—*(Aside to his own reflections.)*—Did he not formerly live in Francconia?

Pastor. He did. At the death of his wife, a few years since, he returned to this castle.

Fre. His wife is dead, then? And the amiable young lady, who was here a few minutes since, is his daughter, I presume?

Pastor. She is.

Fre. And the young sweet-scented beau is his son?

Pastor. He has no son.

Fre.—*(Hastily.)*—Yes—he has.—*(Recollecting himself.)*—I mean the one who was in the field with him to-day.

Pastor. Oh! he is not his son.

Fre.—*(Aside.)*—Thank Heaven!

Pastor. Only a visitor from town.

Fre. I thank you for the little intelligence you have been kind enough to communicate. It has interested me much. I thank you, too, for your philanthropy; but am sorry I cannot make you an offer of my friendship. Were we equals, it might be of some little value.

Pastor Does not friendship, like love, destroy all disparity of rank?

Fre. No, worthy Sir. This enchantment is the property of love alone. I have now only to make one request. Conduct me to Baron Wildenhain, and procure me, if possible, a private conversation with him. I wish to thank him for his generosity, and will not trouble him many minutes; but if he be in company, I shall not be able to speak so openly as I wish.

Pastor. Follow me. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE, *a Room in the Castle.*

The BARON *is seated, and smoaking a Pipe.* AMELIA *is standing at his Side in Conversation with him. The* COUNT *is stretched upon the Sofa, alternately taking Snuff, and holding a Smelling-bottle to his Nose.*

Baron. No, no, Amelia, don't think of it. Towards eve-

ning, when it is cooler, we may, perhaps, take a walk together to see the sick woman.

Amelia. But as it is so delightful to do good, why should it be done through a servant? Charity is a pleasure, and we are surely not too high in rank to enjoy pleasure.

Baron. Pshaw! who said any thing about rank? That was a silly remark, and I could be angry at you for it. I tell you I have sent to the cottage, and the woman is better. Towards evening we will take a walk to the village, and the Pastor, no doubt, will accompany us.

Amelia.—(*Satisfied.*)—Well, if you think so——

[*Seats herself, and begins to work.*

Baron. It will be agreeable to you too, Count, I hope? I dare say you will be gratified.

Count. Je n'en doute pas, mon Colonel. Mademoiselle Amelie's douceur & bonte d'ame will charm me. But I hope the person's disorder is not epidemical. At all events, I am in *possession* of a *vinaigre incomparable*, which is a certain preventative.

Baron. Take it with you then, Count; for I advise you to go by all means. There is no better preventative against *ennui*, than the reviving sight of a fellow-creature grateful for the assistance by which she has been rescued from death.

Count. Ennui, said you? *Ah, mon Colonel*, how could *ennui* find its way to a place inhabited by *Mademoiselle?*

Baron. You are very polite, my Lord. Amelia, don't you thank the Count?

Amelia. I thank your Lordship.

Count.—(*Bowing.*)—Don't mention it, I beg.

Baron. But, Count, pray have you resided much in France?

Count. Ah, mon Colonel, don't refer to that subject, I beseech you. My father, the *barbare*, was guilty of a terrible *sottise*. He refused me a thousand *louis-d'ors*, which I had destined for that purpose. I was there a few months, to be sure—I have seen that land of extacy, and should perhaps have been there still, in spite of *le barbare* my father, had not a disagreeable circumstance——

Baron.—(*Sarcastically.*)—An *affaire d'honneur*, I presume?

Count. Point du tout. A *cavalier* could find no *honneur* in the country. You have heard of the revolution there. You must—for all Europe speaks of it. *Eh bien! Imaginez vous.* I was at *Paris*, and happened to be passing the *palais royal*, not knowing of any thing that had occurred. *Tout d'un coup*, I found myself surrounded by a crowd of greasy tatterdemalions! One pushed me on this side—another on that—a third pinched me—a fourth thrust his fist into my face. "What do you mean?" cried I, "How dare you treat me thus?" The mob, *mon Colonel*, grew still more unruly, and abused me because I had not

a cockade in my hat—*entendez vous?* a national cockade, "*Je suis un Comte du Saint Empire?* cried I. What was the consequence? The fellows beat me, *foi d'honnete homme.* They absolutely beat me; and a filthy *Poissarde* gave me a blow on the cheek. Nay, some began to shout "*A la lanterne!*" What do you say to this, *mon Colonel?* What would you have done *a ma place?* I threw myself into my post-chaise, and decamped as speedily as possible. *Voila tout!* It is an *histoire facheuse*; yet still I must regret that I did not enjoy more of the *moments delicieuses* which I tasted in that *capitale du monde.* But this every one must say—this every one must allow, the *savoir vivre*, the *formation*, and the *pli* which is observable in me, are perfectly French, perfectly *a la mode de Paris.*

Baron. Of that I am not able to form any judgment; but your language is a good deal Frenchified.

Count. Ah, mon Colonel! what a high compliment you pay me!

Baron. I beg you will consider it such.

Count. All my care and anxiety, then, have not been *a pure perte.* For five years I have taken all possible pains to forget my native *langue.* For, Miss Amelia, is it not altogether devoid of grace, and not *supportable* in any respect, except when it proceeds from your lovely lips? What an eternal gurgling it causes in the throat! *a tout moment* must one stammer and hesitate. It does not flow in French meanders. *Par example*; if I want to make *une declaration d'amour*, why of course I should wish to produce a *chef d'œuvre* of eloquence. *Entendez vous? Helas!* Scarcely have spoken a *douzaine* of words, when my tongue turns here—then there—first on this side—then on that. My teeth chatter *pele mele* against each other; and in short, if I were not immediately to add a few French words, in order to bring every thing into proper order, I should run the risk of absolutely losing the faculties of speech for ever. And how can this be otherwise? We have no *genies celebres* to refine the taste. To be sure, there are Germans who pique themselves on *gout*, on *lecture*, on *belles lettres.* There's one *Monsieur* Wieland, who has acquired some degree of *renommee* by a few old tales, which he has translated from the *mille & une nuits*, but still the original is French.

Baron. But Zounds! Count, why are you every moment taking snuff, and holding that smelling-bottle to your nose? And why, I should like to know, must you drench your clothes and my sofa with lavender water? You have so completely scented the room, that a stranger might imagine he was entering the shop of a French milliner.

Count. Pardonnez, mon Colonel; the smoke of tobacco is quite *insupportable.* My nerves are most sensibly affected by it,

and my clothes must be exposed to the open air for at least a month. I assure you, *mon Colonel*, my hair, even my hair, catches the infectious vapour. It is a shocking custom, but we must forgive it in the *messieurs de militaire*, who can have no opportunity *en campagne*, of associating with the *beau monde*, and learning the manners of *haut ton*. But really I find it impossible to endure this *horrible* smell. *Vous m'excuserez, mon Colonel.* I must hasten into the open air, and change my clothes. *Adieu, jusqu' au revoir.* *Exit.*

Baron. Well, heaven be praised, I have discovered a method of driving this creature away, when I am tired of his frivolous conversation!

Amelia. Dear father, I should not like to marry him.

Baron. Nor should I like him to be my son.

Amelia.—*(Who evidently shews that she has something on her mind.)*—I can't endure him.

Baron. Nor I.

Amelia. How can one help it, if one can't endure a man?

Baron. Impossible!

Amelia. Love is involuntary.

Baron. It is.

Amelia. We are very often ignorant why we either love or hate.

Baron. We are so.

Amelia. Yet there are cases in which inclination or aversion are founded on substantial reasons.

Baron. Certainly.

Amelia. For instance, my aversion to the Count.

Baron. True.

Amelia. And my inclination to the Pastor.

Baron. Right.

Amelia.—*(After a pause.)*—I must own I should like to be married.

Baron. You shall.

Amelia.—*(After a pause.)*—Why does not our Pastor marry?

Baron. You must ask himself that question.

Amelia.—*(After another pause, during which she rivets her eyes on her work.)*—He likes me.

Baron. I am glad of it.

Amelia. I like him too.

Baron. That is but just.

Amelia.—*(After another pause.)*—I believe, if you were to offer him my hand, he would not refuse it.

Baron. That I believe too.

Amelia. And I would obey you willingly.

Baron.—*(Beginning to be more attentive.)*—How! are you in earnest?

Amelia. Yes.

Baron. Ha! Ha! Well! we will see.

Amelia.—(*Cheerfully raising her head.*)—Are you in earnest, father.

Baron. No.

Amelia.—(*Dejected.*)—No?

Baron. No, Amelia, this cannot be. To play such romantic tricks as Abelard and Eloisa, Saint Preux and Julia; will never do. Besides, our Pastor is too honourable to have any such thoughts.

Amelia. You are his benefactor.

Baron. At least he esteems me in that light.

Amelia. Surely, then, it would be honourable to make the daughter of his benefactor happy.

Baron. But suppose the daughter is a child, who to-day burns with desire to possess a doll, which to-morrow she will throw away with disgust?

Amelia. Oh, I am not such a child.

Baron. Amelia, let me explain this. A hundred fathers would, in my situation tell you, that, as you are of noble extraction, you must marry a nobleman; but I do not say so. I will not sacrifice my child to any prejudice. A woman never can obtain merit by rank, and has, therefore, no right to be proud of it.

Amelia. Well, and therefore——

Baron. And therefore I should say, "Marry the Pastor with all my heart, if you can't find among our young nobility any one whose mental and personal endowments correspond with your ideas." But of these there are certainly several—perhaps many. You have as yet had no opportunities of seeing them; but next winter we will remove to town, and at some ball, or other place of amusement, you will no doubt meet with one adapted to your taste.

Amelia. Oh, no. I must first become intimately acquainted with a man, and may, perhaps, be then deceived: but I know our Pastor well—I have known him long: I am as perfectly acquainted with his heart as with my catechism.

Baron. Amelia, you have never yet felt the influence of love. The Pastor has been your instructor, and you mistake the warmth of your gratitude for love, not knowing what it really is.

Amelia. You explained it to me this morning.

Baron. Did I: Well, and my questions?

Amelia. Applied exactly to our Pastor. I could have fancied you were acquainted with every sensation of my heart.

Baron. Indeed! Hem!

Amelia. Yes, my dear father, I love, and am beloved.

Baron. Beloved! Has he told you this?

Amelia. Yes.

Baron. Shame on him! He has not acted a proper part.

Amelia. Oh! if you knew how I surprised him——

Baron. You him!

Amelia. He came, by your command, to converse with me, respecting the Count, and I told him I would not marry the Count.

Baron. But him?

Amelia. Yes.

Baron. You are very candid, I must confess. And what did he answer?

Amelia. He talked a great deal about my rank, my family, and my duty to you. In short, he wanted to persuade me not to think of him any more; but my heart would not be persuaded.

Baron. That was noble in him. He will, therefore, not say any thing to me upon the subject.

Amelia. No. He declared he should find that impossible.

Baron. So much the better. I may, then, be supposed to know nothing of the matter.

Amelia. But I told him I would mention it to you.

Baron. So much the worse! I am placed in a very awkward situation.

Amelia. And now I have mentioned it.

Baron. You have.

Amelia. Dear father!

Baron. Dear Amelia!

Amelia. The tears come into my eyes.

Baron.—(*Turning away.*)—Suppress them.—(Amelia, *after a pause, rises and stoops, as if in search of something.*)—What are you seeking?

Amelia. I have lost my needle.

Baron.—(*Pushes his chair back, and stoops to assist her.*)—It cannot have flown far.

Amelia.—(*Approaches and falls on his neck.*)—My good father!

Baron. What now!

Amelia. This one request?

Baron. Let me go. You make my cheeks wet with your tears.

Amelia. I shall never love any other man—I shall never be happy with any other man.

Baron. Pshaw! Be a good girl, Amelia, and banish these childish fancies.—(*Touches her cheek.*)—Sit down again. We will have some further conversation on this subject at another time. You are not in so very great a hurry, I hope; for affairs of such moment require deliberation. The knot of wed-

...ave a lot in a moment, but the matter ... I pray. Now a gir... and I for pardon ... sister to ... of an affection ... a mother ... pernicious ... and ... him. I ... to ... the ... from ... and ... ... pro... the lowest ... Time ... pardon ... is ... ... but if ... you ... and ... ... our ...

Amelia.—Don't ... upon ... ... appearance of ... ...—My ... ...

Baron. Ay, why, if your mother had been ... you would not have escaped in calm. She would have ... ... upon the ... ... when she called ... ...

Enter Pastor.

Baron. Ha! I am glad you are come.

Pastor. In compliance with your desire, my Lord, I have ... the young man from his prison. He waits in the antechamber, and wishes to express his gratitude in person.

Baron. I am glad to hear it. I must not omit him any ... He would have the appearance of half a ... ...

Pastor. He begs to be allowed a private interview.

Baron. Private!—Why?

Pastor. He says he shall be confused in the presence of witnesses. Perhaps so, he wants to make some discovery which weighs heavy on his mind.

Baron. Well! with all my heart! Go, Amelia, and stay with the pastor in the antichamber. I wish to have a little conversation with you both afterwards. [*Exit* Amelia.

The Pastor opens the door, beckons to Frederick *that he may come, and exit.*

Enter Frederick.

Go, young man, and Heaven's blessing be with you! I have sent to your mother, and find she is better. For her sake I pardon you; but take care you do not again commit such an offence. Robbery is but a bad trade. There is a louis-d'or for you. Endeavour to earn an honest livelihood; and if I hear that you are sober, diligent and honest, my doors and my purse shall not be shut to you in future. Now go, and Heaven be with you.

Fre.—(*Taken the louis d'or.*)—You are a generous man, liberal in your charity, and not sparing of your good advice. But allow me to beg another, and a still greater favour. You are a man of large property and influence. Procure me justice against an unnatural father.

Baron. How so? Who is your father?

Fre.—(*With great asperity.*)—A man of consequence; lord of a large domain; esteemed at Court; respected in town; beloved by his peasants; generous, upright, and benevolent.

Baron. And yet allows his son to be in want?

Fre. And yet allows his son to be in want.

Baron. Why, yes, for a very good reason, I dare say. You have probably been a libertine, and squandered large sums at a gaming-table, or on some mistress, and your father has thought it advisable to let you follow the drum for a couple of years. Yes, yes. The drum is an excellent remedy for wild young rakes; and if you have been one of this description, your father has, in my opinion, acted very wisely.

Fre. You are mistaken, my Lord. My father does not know me, has never seen me; for he abandoned me while I was in my mother's womb.

Baron. What?

Fre. The tears of my mother are all the inheritance he bestowed upon me. He has never enquired after me—never concerned himself respecting me.

Baron. That is wrong—(*confused*)—very wrong.

Fre. I am a natural son. My poor, deluded mother educated me amidst anxiety and sorrow. By the labour of her hands she earned as much as enabled her, in some degree, to cultivate my mind; and I therefore think I might be a credit to a father. But mine willingly renounces the satisfaction and the pleasures of a parent, and his conscience leaves him at ease respecting the fate of his unfortunate child.

Baron. At ease! If his conscience be at ease in such a situation, he must be a hardened wretch indeed.

Fre. Having attained an age at which I could provide for myself, and wishing no longer to be a burden to my indigent mother, I had no recourse but this coat. I enlisted into a volunteer corps—for an illegitimate child cannot obtain a situation under any tradesman.

Baron. Unfortunate young man!

Fre. Thus passed my early years, in the bustle of a military life. Care and sorrow are the companions of maturer years. To the thoughtless youth nature has granted pleasure, that he may strengthen himself by the enjoyment of it, and thereby be prepared to meet the care and sorrow which await him. But the pleasures of my youth have been stripes; the dainties I have feasted on have been coarse bread and clear water. Yet, what cares my father? His table is sumptuously covered, and to the scourge of conscience he is callous.

Baron.—(*Aside.*)—His words pierce to my heart.

Fre. After a separation of five years from my mother, I returned to-day, feasting on the visions of anticipated bliss. I found her a beggar on the highway. She had not tasted food for four and twenty hours—She had no straw to rest her head upon—no roof to protect her from the inclemency of the weather—no compassionate fellow-creature to close her eyes—no spot to die upon. But what cares my father for all this? He has a stately castle, and reposes upon swelling beds of down: and when he dies, the Pastor, in a funeral sermon, will descant upon his numerous Christian virtues.

Baron.—(*Shudders.*)—Young man, what is your father's name?

Fre. That he abused the weakness of an innocent female, and deceived her by false vows; that he gave life to an unfortunate being, who curses him; that he has driven his son almost to the commission of parricide—Oh, these are mere trifles, which on the day of retribution may be paid for by this paltry piece of gold.—(*Throws the louis-d'or at the* Baron's *feet.*)

Baron.—(*Almost distracted.*)—Young man, what is your father's name?

Fre. Baron Wildenhain!—(*The* Baron *strikes his forehead with both hands, and stands rooted to the spot.* Frederick *proceeds in most violent agitation.*)—In this house, perhaps in this very room, did you beguile my hapless mother of her virtue, and beget me for the sword of the executioner. And now, my Lord, I am not free—I am your prisoner—I will not be free—I am a robber. Loudly I proclaim I am a robber. *You* shall deliver me over to justice. *You* shall accompany me to the scaffold. *You* shall hear the priest in vain attempting to console me, and inspire my soul with hope. *You* shall hear me, in the anguish of despair, curse my unnatural father. *You* shall stand close to me when my head is severed from my body, and my blood—*your* blood shall besmear your garments.

Baron. Hold! Hold!

Fre. And when you turn away with horror from this spectacle, you shall behold my mother at the foot of the scaffold, and hear her breathe her last convulsive sigh.

Baron. Hold, inhuman as thou art.

Enter Pastor *hastily.*

Pastor. What means this? I heard you speak with violence, young man. Surely you have not dared——

Fre. Yes. I have dared, worthy Pastor, to assume your office, and make a sinner tremble.—(*Pointing to the* Baron.)—Behold there! Thus, after one and twenty years is licentious conduct punished. I am a robber, Sir, a murderer; but what I now suffer, is extacy compared to his sensations. Look

at him. Remorse and anguish rend his very heart-strings. I go to deliver myself into the hands of justice, and appear in another world a bloody witness against that man. [*Exit.*

Pastor. For Heaven's sake! what means this? I do not comprehend———

Baron. He is my son! he is my son! Away, my friend! Lend me your aid at this dreadful moment. Away to the sick woman in the village! Francis will direct you to the cottage. Hasten, I beseech you.

Pastor. But what shall I———

Baron. Oh! Heavens! your heart must instruct you how to act.—(*Exit* Pastor.)—Have I lost my senses?—(*Holding his head.*)—Or am I dreaming?—No.—I have a son—a worthy, noble youth, and as yet I have not clasped him in my arms—as yet I have not pressed him to my heart. Matthew!

Enter a GAMEKEEPER.

Where is he?

Game. Who, my Lord? The robber?

Baron. Scoundrel! The young man, who but this moment left me.

Game. He is waiting to deliver himself up; and we have sent for the constable as he himself desired.

Baron. Kick the constable out of doors, if he comes, and let no one dare to lay a hand on the young man.

Game.—(*Astonished.*)—Very well, my Lord. [*Going.*

Baron. Holla! Matthew!

Game. My Lord!

Baron. Conduct the young soldier into the green chamber over the dining room, and attend on him, if he be in want of any thing.

Game. The Count von der Mulde occupies that chamber, my Lord.

Baron. Turn the Count out, and send him to the devil.—(*The* Gamekeeper *stands in doubt how to proceed, while the* Baron *walks to and fro.*)—I want no son-in-law. I have a son—a son, who shall possess my estates, and continue my name; a son, in whose arms I will die. Yes. I will repair the evils I have caused. I will not be ashamed of recognizing him. All my peasants, all my servants, shall know that, though I could forget, I will not abandon my child. Matthew!

Game. My Lord!

Baron. Conduct him hither. Request him to come hither, and let all my servants accompany him.

Exit Gamekeeper.

How strange are my sensations! My blood courses through my

veins so rapidly that I feel my pulse beat from head to foot. How little do I deserve the bliss which is to-day my lot.

Enter FREDERICK, *surrounded by a crowd of servants.*

He comes!—Quick let me press thee to my heart!—(*Rushes towards him, and clasps him with fervor in his arms.*)—My son!

ACT V.

SCENE, *the Room in the Cottage as in the Second Act.*

WILHELMINA, *the* COTTAGER *and his* WIFE *are discovered.*

Wil. Go to the door once more, good man, and look if he be not coming.

Cot. It will be of no use; I have just been to call on a neighbour, and looked round on every side, but he is not to be seen.

Wife. Have a little patience. Who knows where he may be staying?

Cot. Very true. He is gone to the town, I dare say.

Wife. Ay, and little good will he do there; for people are hard-hearted enough there.

Wil. Good man, do look once more. He may, perhaps, be coming now.

Cot. Well! well! I'll look. *Exit.*

Wife. If your son knew what Heaven has sent you since he left us, he would soon return.

Wil. I feel alarmed respecting him.

Wife Alarmed! Pshaw! She who has a heavy purse in her pocket should be at ease. I mean, if she obtained it honestly.

Wil. Where can he loiter thus? It is four hours since he left us. Some misfortune must have happened to him.

Wife. Misfortune! How can that be? Why, it is broad daylight. Come, come! Cheer up! We'll have a hearty meal at night. With all that money you may live comfortably for many a day. Oh, our Baron is a good, generous man.

Wil. How could he learn I was here?

Wife, That Heaven knows. Mr. Francis was so close——

Wil.—(*Half aside.*)—Has he discovered who I am; Oh, yes! Doubtless he knows me, or he would not have sent so much.

Wife, Don't say that. Our Baron is often charitable to strangers, too.

Re-enter COTTAGER, *scratching his Head.*

Wil.—(*As soon as she sees him.*)—Well?

Cot. I can discover nothing, if I stare till I am blind,

Wil. Merciful Heavens! What can this mean?

Cot. Our Pastor just now came round the corner.

Wil. Is he coming hither?

Cot. Who knows but he may? He generally gives us a call every three or four weeks.

Wife. Yes, he is very kind in his visits to all his parishioners. He talks to them about their farms, and so forth. When there are any quarrels and disputes, he settles them. When any one is in distress, he assists them. Do you remember, husband, when our lame neighbour Michael's cow died?

Cot. Ay, he sent him another—the best milch-cow he had. Heaven bless him for it!

Wife. Heaven bless him, say I too, with all my heart.

Enter PASTOR.

Pastor. God be with you, good people!

Cot. and Wife. Good day to you, Sir.

Cot. We are glad to see you.

Wife.—(*Wipes a chair with her apron.*)—Pray sit down.

Cot. It is a warm day. Shall I fetch you a draught of beer?

Wife. Or a couple of mellow pears?

Pastor. I thank you, good people, but I am not thirsty. You have a visitor, I perceive.

Cot. Yes, Sir, a poor woman, who is very weak and ill. I found her on the high-road.

Pastor. Heaven will reward you for assisting her.

Cot. That it has already done, Sir; for my wife and I never were more happy since we were married than we are to-day. Eh, Rachel? [*Offering his hand.*

Wife. Yes; that we are. [*They shake hands.*

Pastor.—(*To* Wilhelmina.)—Who are you, good woman?

Wil. I!—Alas!—(*In a whisper.*)—If we were alone——

Pastor.—(*To* Cottager.)—Be so kind, honest John, as to let me have a little private conversation with this good woman.

Cot. To be sure. Do you hear, Rachel? Come.

Exeunt Cottager *and* Wife.

Pastor. Now, we are alone.

Wil. Before I confess to you who I am, and who I was, allow me to ask a few questions. Are you a native of this country?

Pastor. No. I was born in Franconia.

Wil. Were you acquainted with the venerable Pastor who was your predecessor?

Pastor. No.

Wil. You are totally ignorant, then, of my unhappy story, and mere accident has brought you hither?

Pastor. If in you I find the person whom I suspect, and

whom I long have sought, your story is not quite unknown to me.

Wil. Whom you suspect, and whom you long have sought! Who commissioned you to do this?

Pastor. A man who sincerely sympathizes in your distresses.

Wil. Indeed! Oh, Sir tell me quickly whom you suspect to have discovered in me.

Pastor. Wilhelmina Boetcher.

Wil. Yes, I am the unfortunate, deluded Wilhelmina Boetcher. And the man who sympathizes so sincerely in my distresses is—Baron Wildenhain; the man who robbed me of my virtue, murdered my father, and for twenty years has exposed me and his child to misery. All this he believes he can to-day atone for by a purse of gold—(*Draws out the purse.*)—Whatever may be your intention in coming hither, Sir, whether it be to humble me, assist me, or send me beyond the borders, that the sight of me may not reproach the libertine, I have but one request to make. Take back this purse to him who sent it. Tell him my virtue was not sold for gold. Tell him my peace of mind cannot be bought with gold. Tell him my father's curse cannot be removed from me by gold. Say that Wilhelmina, poor, starving, and in a beggar's rags, still scorns to accept a favour from the hands of her seducer. He despised my heart—I despise his money. He trampled upon me—I trample upon his money.—(*Throws the purse on the earth with violence.*)—But he shall be left to revel as heretofore. The sight of me shall not be an interruption to his pleasures. As soon as I have in some degree recovered my strength, I will for ever quit this place; where the name of Wildenhain and the grave of my father bow me to the ground. Tell him, too, I knew not that he was returned from Franconia, and was in this neighbourhood; for he may fancy I came hither in search of him. Oh, let him not fancy that!—(*Breathing with difficulty.*)—Now, Sir, you see that your presence, and the subject to which your visit led me, have exhausted my strength. I know not what I can say more. I know not, indeed, what more can be required of me by him who sent you.—(*With indignation.*)—But, yes: It may, perhaps, have occurred to his Lordship, that he once promised me marriage; that on his knees he called the Almighty to witness his vow, and pledged his honour to fulfil it. Ha! Ha! Ha! Tell him not to discompose himself on that account. I have long since forgotten it.

Pastor. I have allowed you to proceed without interruption, that I might learn your sentiments with respect to the Baron, and your general way of thinking. Unprepared, as you must have been, for a conversation with me, your full heart has overflowed, and I am convinced you have not used any dissimulation.

I therefore rejoice to find you a noble woman, worthy of every reparation which a man of honour can make. I rejoice too, in being able at once to remove an error, which perhaps, has, in a great degree, caused the asperity of your expressions. Had the Baron known that the sick woman in this cottage was Wilhelmina Boetcher, and had he then, instead of all consolation, sent her this purse, he would have deserved—to have been murdered by his own son. But no. This was not the case. Look at me. My profession demands confidence; but setting that aside, I would not utter a falsehood. A mere accident made you the object of his charity, which he imagined he was exercising towards one unknown to him.

Wil. How, Sir! would you convince me that this present was the effect of mere accident? To one unknown to him he might have sent a guilder, or a dollar, but not a purse of gold.

Pastor. I grant that appearances are against my assertion, but the accident was of a peculiar nature. Your son———

Wil. What of my son?

Pastor. Compose yourself. The Baron was affected by the way in which your son implored his charity.

Wil. Charity! Did he implore the Baron's charity?—His father's charity?

Pastor. Yes, but they did not know each other; and the mother, therefore, only received this present for the son's sake.

Wil. They did not know each other! Where is my son?

Pastor. At the castle.

Wil. And do they not yet know each other?

Pastor. They do; and I now appear here by command of the Baron, who sent me not to a sick woman, but to Wilhelmina Boetcher; not with money, but with a commission to do as my heart directed.

Wil. *Your* heart! Oh, Sir, do not lend that cruel man the sensations of *your* heart. But, yes—be it so. I will forget what I have endured on his account, if he will console me by his conduct towards Frederick. As a woman I will pardon him, if he will deserve a mother's thanks. How did he receive my boy?

Pastor. I left him in most violent agitation. It was the very moment of discovery, and nothing was resolved upon. But, doubtless, while we are now in conversation, the son is in his father's arms. I am convinced by the goodness of his heart——

Wil. The goodness of his heart again! Heavens! How can this man's heart, be so suddenly altered? After having been for twenty years deaf to the voice of nature———

Pastor. You wrong him. Listen to me before you decide. Many an error seems, on a superficial view, most infamous; but did we know every circumstance which tended to excite it, every trifle which had an imperceptible effect in producing it,

our opinion would be very different. Could we accompany the offender from step to step, instead of seeing, as in the present instance, only the first, the tenth, and twentieth, we should often pardon when we now condemn. Far be it from me to defend the Baron's conduct towards you, but surely I may maintain that a good man, by committing one bad action, does not, on that account, entirely forfeit his claim to the title of a good man. Where is the demi-god, who can boast that his conscience is as pure as snow just fallen from the sky? If there be such a boaster, for Heaven's sake place no confidence in him; he is far more dangerous than a repentant sinner. Forgive me, if I appear too talkative; and let me now tell you, in a few words, the story of the Baron since your separation. At that time he loved you most sincerely; and nothing but the dread of his rigid mother prevented the fulfilment of his promise. But he was summoned into the field, where he was dangerously wounded, and made a prisoner. For a year he was confined to his bed. He could not write, and received no intelligence of you. Thus did the impression of your image on his mind first become weaker. He had been conducted from the field of battle to a neighbouring castle, the owner of which was a worthy nobleman, who possessed a large fortune and a beautiful daughter. This lady became enamoured of the young officer, and seldom left his couch. She attended on him with the affection of a sister, and shed many tears for his fate, which were not unobserved. Gratitude knit the band, which death rent asunder but a few months since. Thus the impression of your image was erased from his mind. He did not return to his native land, but purchased an estate in Franconia, to the cultivation of which he devoted his time. He became a husband and a father. None of the objects which surrounded him reminded him of you, and thus the recollection of you slumbered, till care, anxiety, and domestic discord awoke it, and embittered his existence; for, when it was too late, he discovered in his wife, a proud, imperious being, who had been spoilt in her infancy, who always thwarted him, always insisted on being right, and seemed only to have rescued him from death, in order to have the pleasure of tormenting him. At that time an accident led me to his house. He became attached to me, made me the instructor of his daughter, and soon after entrusted me with his confidence. Oh, how often has he pressed my hand in violent emotion to his heart, and said, "This woman revenges on me the wrongs of the innocent Wilhelmina." How often has he cursed all the wealth which his wife had brought him, and sighed for a less splendid, but far happier lot in your arms! When, at length, the old pastor of Wildenhain died, and he bestowed the benefice on me, the first expression which accom-

panied the gift was, "There, my friend, you will gain some tidings of my Wilhelmina." Every letter, which I afterwards received from him, contained this exclamation: "Still no account of my Wilhelmina!" I have those letters, and can let you see them. It was not in my power to discover where you dwelt. Fate had higher views respecting you, and prevented it until to-day.

Wil. Your description has excited in my breast emotions, which my heart acknowledges to be conviction. But how can this end? What will become of me?

Pastor. The Baron, I must own, has never told me what he meant to do in case he ever found you: but your sufferings demand reparation; and I know but one way in which this reparation can be made. Noble-minded woman, if your strength will allow it, accompany me. The road is good, and the distance short.

Wil. I accompany you! Appear before him in these rags!

Pastor. Why not?

Wil. Do I wish to reproach him?

Pastor. Exalted being! Come to my house. My sister shall supply you with clothes, and my carriage shall take us to the castle.

Wil. And shall I see my Frederick again?

Pastor. Rest assured you will.

Wil.—*(Rising.)*—Well! For his sake I will undergo the painful meeting. He is the only branch on which my hopes still blossom—all the rest are withered and destroyed. But where are the good Cottagers? I must take leave of them, and thank them.

Pastor.—(*Takes up the purse, and goes to the door.*)—Neighbour John!

Enter COTTAGER *and his* WIFE.

Cot. Here I am.

Wife. Well, you can stand again, I see, thank Heaven.

Pastor. Yes, good people. I shall take her with me. I can accommodate her better than you, though you have done what you could.

Cot. Why, to be sure, we can give her no more than we have, and that is but little.

Wife. But she is very welcome to that.

Pastor. You have acted like worthy people. There! take that as a reward for your kindness.—(*Offers the purse to the* Cottager, *who puts his hands together before him, twirls his thumbs, looks at the money, and shakes his head.*)—Well! won't you take it?—*Offers it to his* Wife, *who plays with the strings of her*

apron, looks askance at the money, and tickles her hand.—What means this?

Cot. Sir, don't be offended, but we don't choose to be paid for doing our duty.

Wife.—*(Looking towards heaven.)*—You have taken such a way as we should be paid hereafter.

Pastor.—*(Laying his hands on their shoulders, much affected.)*—You will. God bless you!

Wil. You will not refuse my thanks?

Cot. Say no more about the matter.

Wife. We assisted you with pleasure.

Wil. Farewell! *(The Cottager and his Wife shake hands with her.)*

Cot. Good bye! Take care of yourself.

Wife. And when you come this way, let us see you.

(Wilhelmina *wipes her eyes, leans on the* Pastor's *arm, and supports herself on the other side with a stick.*)

Pastor. God be with you!

Cot.—*(Taking off his cap, and scraping.)*—Good day to you, Sir!

Wife. We are much obliged to you for this visit.

Both. And we hope we shall soon see you again.—*(They attend the* Pastor *and* Wilhelmina *to the door.)*

Cot.—*(Presenting his hand to his* Wife.)—Well, Rachel, how shall we sleep to night, think you?

Wife.—*(Shaking his hand.)*—Like tops.

[Exeunt.

SCENE, *an Apartment in the Castle.*

The BARON *is seated on a Sofa, exhausted by various Exertions.* FREDERICK *stands leaning over him, and pressing his Father's Hand between his own.*

Baron. So you have really seen some service? You know the smell of gunpowder? I'll stake my head against a turnip, that if you had been Frederick von Wildenhain, you would have been spoilt by your father and mother; but as Frederick Boetcher, you are become a fine spirited lad. This has, to be sure, cost you many an uneasy hour. Your juvenile days have not been very comfortable. Well! Well! You shall feel an alteration for the better, Frederick. I will legitimate you. Yes, my boy, I will openly acknowledge you as my only son and heir. What say you to this? Eh?

Fre. And my mother?

Baron. She shall be well provided for, too. Do you think your father is poor? Don't you know that Wildenhain is one of the best estates in the country? Yes, and but a mile from it lies

Wellendorf, another neat place; and in Franconia I obtained with my wife—*(Heaven rest her soul!)*—three large manors.

Fre. But my mother?

Baron. Well, I was just going to say that she may reside where she chuses. If she will not live in Franconia, why, she may remain at Wellendorf. There is a neat little house, neither too large, nor too small; an excellent garden; a charming prospect; in short, the place is a little paradise. She shall have every thing she wants, and a happy old age shall smooth the furrows which the misfortunes of youth have ploughed in her face.

Fre.—(Retreating a few steps.)—How!

Baron. Yes, and I'll tell you what, my boy. It is but a short distance from the castle. If, when we rise in a morning, we feel disposed to visit your mother, we need but order a couple of horses to be saddled, and in an hour we shall be with her.

Fre. Indeed! And what name is my mother to bear, when she lives there?

Baron.—(*Embarrassed.*)—How?

Fre. Is she to be considered as your housekeeper, or your mistress?

Baron. Pshaw! Pshaw!

Fre. I understand you. I will withdraw, my father, and give you time to consider well before you finally resolve on any thing. But one thing I must irrevocably swear by all that is dear and sacred to me: My fate is inseparable from that of my mother. Frederick von Wildenhain and Wilhelmina von Wildenhain; or Frederick Boetcher, and Wilhelmina Boetcher!

[*Exit.*

Baron. Zounds! What does he want? He surely does not expect me to marry his mother. No, no, young man; you must not dictate to your father how he is to act. I was flattering myself with the idea of having arranged every thing very comfortable, was as happy as a king from having relieved my conscience of a heavy burden, was breathing more freely than for many years, when this boy throws a stone at my feet, and wants to make me stumble over it again. No, no. Friend conscience, I thank Heaven that I can address thee as a freind again. What thinkst thou to this? Thou art silent. But no. Methinks thou art still not completely satisfied.

Enter PASTOR.

Ha! my friend, you come most opportunely. My conscience and I are involved in a suit, which must be determined in the court where you preside.

Pastor. Your conscience is right,

Baron. Hold! hold! You are deciding before you know the merits of the case. Your sentence is partial.

Pastor. Conscience is always right; for it never speaks until it is right.

Baron. Indeed! But I am as yet ignorant whether it speaks or is silent. On such occasions a divine has a quicker ear than a layman. Listen to me. I will state the case in a few words.—(*Laying his hands on the* Pastor's *shoulder.*)—My friend, I have found my son, and a noble fellow he is—full of fire as a Frenchman, of pride as an Englishman, and of honour as a German.—That apart;—I mean to legitimate him. Am I not right?

Pastor. Perfectly.

Baron. And his mother shall enjoy peace and comfort for the remainder of her life. I mean to settle my Wellendorf estate upon her. There she may live, alter it according to her own taste, revive in the happiness of her son, and grow young again amidst the gambols of her grandchildren. Am I not right!

Pastor. You are not.

Baron.—(*Starting.*)—How!—What should I do, then?

Pastor. Marry her.

Baron. Yes. That is very likely to be sure!

Pastor. Baron Wildenhain is a man who does nothing without a sufficient reason. I stand here as the advocate for your conscience, and expect you to produce your reasons, after which you shall hear mine.

Baron. Zounds! why, you would not wish me to marry a beggar?

Pastor.—(*After a pause.*)—Is that all you can advance?

Baron.—(*At a loss.*)—No—not exactly—I have other reasons—several other—

Pastor. May I beg you to mention them?

Baron.—(*Very much embarrassed.*)—I am a nobleman.

Pastor. Proceed.

Baron. The world will ridicule me.

Pastor. Proceed.

Baron. My relatives will shun me.

Pastor. Proceed.

Baron. And—and—(*Very violently.*)—Zounds! I can't proceed.

Pastor. Then it is my turn to speak on the subject; but, before I do this, allow me to ask a few questions. Did Wilhelmina, by coquetry, or levity of conduct, first raise in you a wish to seduce her?

Baron. No; she was always chaste and modest.

Pastor. Did it cost you any trouble to gain your point?

Baron. Yes.

Pastor. Did you ever promise her marriage.—(*The* Baron

hesitates. The Pastor *says with great solemnity*)—I repeat my question. Did you ever promise her marriage?

Baron. Yes.

Pastor. And summoned God to witness that promise?

Baron. Yes.

Pastor. You pledged your honour that you would fulfil this vow—did you not?

Baron.—(*With impatience.*)—Yes, yes.

Pastor. Well, my Lord, from your own confession it appears that the witness you called upon was God, who beheld you then, who beholds you now. The pledge you offered was your honour, which you must redeem, if you be a man of integrity. I now stand in your presence, impressed with the full dignity of my vocation. I shall speak to you as I would speak to the meanest of your peasants: for my duty commands it; and I will fulfil my duty, should I even thereby forfeit your esteem. If in the days of gay and thoughtless youth, (when a man lives as it were, only to enjoy the present moment,) you seduced an innocent female without considering what might be the consequence; and if, when more advanced in years, you repented your youthful indiscretion, and endeavoured to make every reparation in your power, you are still a respectable man. But if a licentious youth, by wicked snares, has plunged a guiltless being into misery; has destroyed the happiness and innocence of a female, to gratify a momentary passion; has, while intoxicated with his happiness, pledged his honour, and and sacrificed his conscience, to his brutal desires; can he imagine reparation may be made by a paltry handful of gold which chance bestowed on him? Oh, such a wretch deserves—pardon my warmth, my Lord. It might injure a good cause, though it is on this occasion very natural. Ye good old days of chivalry! you have taken with you all your virtues, your sense of honour, your respect for female delicacy, and have left us nothing but your pride and broils. The conquest of innocence is, in our degenerate days, an act of heroism, which the conqueror glories in, while the helpless victim of seduction curses the murderer of her honour, and perhaps, projects the murder of her infant which is in her womb. Once more, my Lord, I say you must fulfil your promise. You ought to do it, if you were a prince; for a prince, though he may be released by the state from the fulfilment of his vows, will never be released by his conscience. Therefore, thank God that you are not a prince. Thank God that it is in your power to purchase at so cheap a rate the most valuable of all treasures—peace of mind. In resolving to marry Wilhelmina, you have not even any claim to merit; for this union will enhance your happiness. What a pity it is that it does not cost you any sacrifice, that your whole property is not de-

pendant on it! Then might you have stept forth and said, "I'll marry Wilhelmina. Do I not act nobly?" But now when she brings you a dowry larger than any princess could bestow, your peace of mind, and an amiable son, now you can do nothing but exclaim, "Friend, wish me joy; I'll marry Wilhelmina."

Baron.—(*Who, during the* Pastor's *address, has alternately walked up and down the room in most violent agitation, and stood with his eyes fixed on the earth, at one moment exhibiting marks of anger, at another of remorse, now approaches the* Pastor *with open arms, and presses him to his heart.*)—Friend, wish me joy I'll marry Wilhelmina.

Pastor.—(*Returning his embrace.*)—I do wish you joy.

Baron. Where is she? You have seen her?

Pastor. She is in that room. That I might not excite curiosity I conducted her rather through the garden.

Baron. Well, then you shall marry us this very day.

Pastor. That cannot be. The union must not take place so soon, and must not be so private. All your tenantry witnessed Wilhelmina's disgrace: they, therefore, ought to witness the restoration of her honour. On three successive Sundays I will publish the bans. Do you agree to this?

Baron. With all my heart.

Pastor. We will then celebrate the nuptials; and the whole village will participate in your happiness. Do you agree to this!

Baron. Yes.

Pastor. Is the suit then, at an end? Is your conscience silent?

Baron. Still as a mouse. I only wish the first interview was over. I feel as much ashamed of first meeting Wilhelmina's eye, as a thief when obliged to appear before the person whom he has defrauded.

Pastor. Be at ease. Wilhelmina's heart is the judge.

Baron. And (why should I not confess it?) prejudices resemble wounds, which though as nearly healed as possible, smart when any alteration takes place in the weather. I—I am ashamed—of confessing all these circumstances to my daughter—to the Count—to my servants. I wish it was over. I should not like to see Wilhelmina—I should not like to resign myself entirely to joy, till I have explained every thing to—Holla! Francis!

Enter a GAMEKEEPER.

Where are my daughter and the Count?

Game. In the dining-room, my Lord.

Baron. Tell them I shall be glad to see them here.

[*Exit* Gamekeeper.

Stay with me, my worthy friend, lest the Count's insipidity

should put me out of humour. I will tell him clearly and briefly what my opinion is, and if his senses be not entirely destroyed by the follies of France, he will order his horses to be put to the carriage, and—he may then drive with all his boxes of *pomade* to the devil.

Enter AMELIA *and the* COUNT.

Count. Nous voila a vos ordres, mon Colonel. We have been enjoying a *promenade delicieuse.* Wildenhain is a paradise on earth, and possesses an *Eva,* who resembles the mother of mankind. Nothing is wanting to complete this garden of Eden except an Adam, who, as we are told by *mythologie,* accepted with rapture the apple of death itself from her fair hand—and this Adam is found—yes, my Lord, this Adam is found.

Baron. Who is found? Frederick, but not Adam.

Count. Frederick! Who is he?

Baron. My son—my only son.

Count. Comment? Your son! *Mon pere* assured me you had no children except *Mademoiselle.*

Bar. Your *pere* could not know I had a son, because till within a few minutes I was myself ignorant of the circumstance.

Count. Vous parlez des enigmes.

Baron. In short, the young man who attacked us this morning in the field. You remember him, for you ran away from him quickly enough.

Count. I have a confused recollection of having seen him—But proceed.

Baron. Well, that very young man is my son.

Count. He your son? Impossible!

Baron. Yes, he.—(*Apart to the* Pastor)—I am really ashamed of confessing the truth even to that coxcomb.

Pastor. A man like you ashamed of such an animal as that!

Baron.—(*Aloud.*)—He is my natural son. But that is of little consequence; for in two or three weeks I shall marry his mother, and shall break any man's bones who ridicule me for it. Yes, Amelia, you may stare. The boy is your brother.

Amelia.——(*Delighted.*)——Are you joking, or serious?

Count. And who is his mother, *mon Colonel?* Is she of good extraction?

Baron. She is——(*To the* Pastor.)——Pray answer him.

Pastor. She is a beggar.

Count.—(*Smiling.*)—*Vous badinez.*

Pastor. If you particularly wish to know her name, it is Wilhelmina Boetcher.

Count. Boetcher! The family is quite unknown to me.

Baron. Very likely. She belongs to the family of honest people, and that is unfortunately a very small one.

Count. A *mesalliance then?*

Pastor. Generosity and integrity will be united with affection and fidelity. You may call that *mesalliance* if you please.

Count. It really requires an *Œdipe* to unravel this mystery. *Un fils naturel? A la bonne heure, mon Colonel!* I have two natural children. There are *momens* in which instinct and a tempting girl are irresistible—In short, such things happen every day. *Mais mon dieu!* What attention should be paid to such creatures? Let them learn some business or other, and they are provided for. Mine shall be both *friseurs.*

Baron. And mine shall be a nobleman, as well as heir to all the estates I possess.

Count. Me voila stupefait. Miss Amelia, I must plead in your behalf. You are on the point of being *ecrasee.*

Amelia. Don't trouble yourself, my Lord.

Count. La fille unique! L'unique heretiere!

Amelia. I shall still possess and inherit the affection of my father.

Baron. Good Amelia! Right, my dear girl! Come hither, and give me a kiss.—(Amelia *flies into his arms.*)—Count, you will oblige me by leaving us for a few moments. We may, perhaps, have a scene here, which will not suit your disposition.

Count. De tout mon cœur! We understand each other. It is *clair de lune,* and I hope you will therefore allow me to return this evening to town.

Baron. As you please.

Count. A dire vrai, mon Colonel! I did not come hither in search of a *voleur de grand chemin* for my brother-in-law, or a *gueuse* for my mother-in-law.—(*Skipping away.*)—*Henri! Henri!* [*Exit.*

Baron.—(*Still holding* Amelia *in his arms.*)—I breathe more freely. Now a word with you, my dear Amelia. Twenty years ago I basely seduced a poor girl, and gave life to a child, who till to day has been a prey to poverty, and distress. The circumstance has weighed on my heart like a rock of granite. You have often observed, that on a dreary evening, when I sat in my arm-chair with my pipe in my mouth, and my eye fixed on the floor, I did not attend to you, when you spoke to me, smiled at me, or caressed me. I was then overpowered by the accusations of conscience, and felt that all my riches, that even you, my child, could not restore to me the blissful sensations of an honest man. Thanks be to Heaven, those sensations are restored to me——the causes of their absence, my wife and son, are restored to me. This worthy man feels—(*pointing to the* Pastor)—and I feel—(*pointing to his heart*)—it is my duty to acknowledge them as my wife and son. What think you?

Amelia.—(*Caressing him.*)—Can my father ask?

Baron. Will the loss be no affliction to you, if your father's peace of mind be purchased with it?

Amelia. What loss.

Baron. You were my only child, and all my estates would——

Amelia.——(*Gently reproving him.*)——Hold, my father!

Baron. You lose some valuable manors.

Amelia. For which my brother's affection will requite me.

Baron. And mine.—(*Clasps her with fervour in his arms.*)

Pastor.—(*Turning away.*)—And why not mine?

Baron.—(*To the* Pastor.)—My friend, I am obliged to you for the conquest over one prejudice, to myself for the conquest over another. A man who, like you, is the friend and supporter of virtue, raises his profession to the highest pitch of human excellence—of human rank. If all your brethren resembled you, Christianity might be proud indeed. You are a noble *man*—I am but a *noble*man. If I be on the point of becoming more, I am obliged to you for the promotion. I owe you much. Amelia will you pay the debt for me?

(Amelia *gazes for a moment at her father, in doubt how to understand his words. He releases her hand, after leading her towards the* Pastor, *into whose arms she immediately flies.*)

Pastor.—(*Astonished beyond all measure.*)—Heavens! my Lord!

Baron. Say not a word on the subject.

Amelia.—(*Kissing him.*)—Silence!—I know you love me!—(*The* Pastor *releases himself from her embrace. Tears gush from his eyes. He attempts to speak, but is unable. He then approaches the* Baron, *seizes his hand, and is about to press it to his lips, when the* Baron *withdraws it, and clasps him in his arms.* Amelia *looks at them, and says*)—How happy do I feel!

Baron.——(*Releasing himself from the* Pastor.)——Zounds! I shall begin to shed tears. Let me endeavour to compose myself. A scene awaits me, which will affect my heart still more than this. Well, my dear son, in a few moments all will be at an end, and the last beams of the setting sun will smile upon the happiest beings in nature's wide-extended empire. Where is Wilhelmina?

Pastor. I will bring her hither. [*Going.*

Baron. Stop! How strange are my sensations! Let me have another moment—Let me compose myself.——(*Walks to and fro, breathes with difficulty, and looks several times towards the room into which the* Pastor *said he had conducted* Wilhelmina.)——She will come from that room!—That was my mother's bedroom!—Often have I seen her come from it.—Often have I feasted on her fascinating smile. How shall I be able to endure her care-worn look? Frederick shall intercede in my behalf.—Where is he?—Holla?